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THE LONE WIDOW'S SOLACE.

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

Yes, she sat there alone, with the daintiest cap
Perched atop of her soft brown hair;
The deep weeds of mourning, though sombre as night,
But rendered the widow more fair.

She thought of her wedded one's grave far away,
'Neath the cypress-tree's evergreen shade,
And wondered if she would not happier be
When she by his side should be laid.

Then she sighed, as she looked at his vacant chair
By the hearthstone, waiting him still;
And she wondered if ever another guest
That long-honored place would fill.

And she sighed, when crackled the cozy wood-fire,
That she now must enjoy all alone;
For "the blessings that ye have received, freely give,"
Was a favorite theme of her own.

Then she thought of her neighbor across the way,
Who mourned his departed wife;
And she sighed again, but not for herself—
For the *deacon's* desolate life!

He was chastened, though why she never could tell;
Who in prayer was so gifted as he?
And in singing a soul-stirring psalm or hymn,
Who seemed nearer heaven to be?

The while she mused thus, the deacon, too thought
Of a lesson he had learned in his youth,
To "love all his neighbors as well as himself,"
And he asked, "Have I done this in truth?"

Another old adage arose in his mind:
"What ought to be done to-day,
Defer not till to-morrow." He started at once
To comfort poor lone Widow May!

In comforting others, *our* griefs may grow less;
The deacon forgot *all* his own!
In all that was said, only *one* text he heard:
"It 's not good that man dwell alone!"

If only he dared—and his heart beat fast,
For the widow his suit might decline:
"Would you—or might I—that is, now, I mean—
Your home is so lonely—and *mine!*"

And the widow blushed as his eager eyes
His meaning at last made plain;
And *one* lonely house, where once there were *two*,
Gives token he wooed not in vain!

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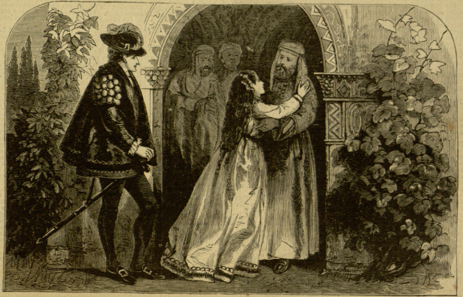

THE MEETING OF MIRIAM AND HER FATHER AFTER HER RESCUE FROM THE RUFFIANS.

THE GRANADAN DUEL;

OR, THE

Castilian and the Moor.

A ROMANCE OF THE COURT OF THE ALHAMBRA.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

CHAPTER IV.

MICHAEL IN A QUANDARY.

While Guy of St. Mark, with the assistance of Pedro, was fixing a pillow for Manfred's head, the Moor called his horse to his side, and took from the saddle-bow a small silver horn, which he wound with a ringing, martial call; and having done this he rejoined his new friends.

Guy's first movement, after having fixed the pillow, had been to unlace the shirt of mail at the throat, in doing which he had exposed the glittering talisman. Under the impulse of the moment, knowing not how badly the knight might be hurt, and knowing not into what hands he might fall for leechery, he slipped the chain from Manfred's neck, and hid the marvellous jewel away in his own bosom. He had just accomplished this when the Moor joined him.

"Good, kind friends," said the Moslem, in a voice peculiarly soft and winning, "you must allow me to bear a part in your labors. I trust our brave champion is not mortally harmed."

"I know not," returned Guy, pulling the battered mail away from the shoulder as he spoke. "It would not seem to be a fatal point unless the weapon sank far deeper than appears."

Together they removed the shirt of mail, while Pedro went to the river for water, which he brought in a steel cap.

"The gash does not appear to be a deep one," said the Moor.

And in truth it was not. The well-tempered mail had obstructed a blow which might else have crashed through to the vitals; but the terrific force of the stroke, falling upon a nervous system already severely tried, had caused a dead faint, from which the sufferer began to revive as soon as the broken links had been taken out from the wound; and when the shoulder had been bathed with the cool water he started to a sitting posture and looked around.

"Michael!" he called.

"Where is Michael?" asked Guy, seeming for the first time to note the absence of the man.

"He has not been with us during our fray," said Pedro. "He must have remained behind."

"How?" cried Guy, in surprise. "Not with us? My soul! I had not thought that Michael was—"

Manfred, whose senses were fully returned, stopped the speech before the unjust thought could be uttered. Coming out from the oblivious rest his mind seemed keener than usual, and with quick perception he considered the situation. He remembered the voice of the man who had struck him, and whom he had stricken in return, and he knew that the attack upon the Moorish horseman had been the result of a carefully laid plot. There might be other enemies at hand than those who had appeared beneath the chestnuts.

"Hold!" he interposed. "You speak of one of the bravest among the brave. If Michael is not here, be sure he hath found work elsewhere. God grant that he may not be worse off than am I."

"Easy, Sir Manfred," said Guy. "If my words seemed a reflection upon your esquire I now unsay them. Let us first look at your wound, and we will then look for Michael."

Without further delay Manfred submitted to the manipulations of his friends, and very soon a wet compress had been placed upon the wound, and the shoulder well bound up. The hurt was not a deep one. Thanks to the temper of the mail the bones of the shoulder had been enabled to bring up the blow without being fractured.

This done, both Guy and Pedro started off in quest of Michael, leaving the Moor in charge of the wounded Knight.

"My brave friend—my brother," spoke the Moslem, "I feel that to you especially do I owe my life. The man whom you have slain was the very terror of Granada—a giant in strength, and a ruffian by instinct and profession. I know full well that he had aimed the blow which would have proved fatal to me had not you interfered as you did. Allow me to hope that both yourself and your companion may be repaid in something more than empty gratitude."

Manfred looked up into the speaker's face, and beheld a man of medium height and size, whose Moorish features were of the very finest mould, and whose face was strikingly handsome. He was of middle-age—not more than five-and-forty—and his bearing was that of a man in authority.

Manfred was strongly impressed by the face, and the simple fact that the man had been the object of a plot of such dire magnitude was sufficient indication of his social, if not political, importance.

"Fair sir," returned the youthful Knight, "I am glad that my first essay in Granada has been so pleasant."

"How say you?—Pleasant? By my faith, I should judge that it had been far from pleasant to you."

"Who knows," said Manfred, reflectively, "what fate might have been mine in another direction! But," he added, looking up with a smile, "what is this poor wound compared with a human life? If this slashed shoulder stands between yourself and death, I can bear it cheerfully, and deem it a pleasure."

The stranger's face beamed with a grateful look, and the warm light of the lustrous eyes told of a depth of feeling which words might not have spoken, and which he did not attempt to speak. He grasped the youth's hand, and lowly said,—

"Let the time to come show how grateful I can be." Then, after a pause, he added,—

"Your remarks would imply that you are a stranger in Granada?"

"Yes. I saw your city yesterday for the first time."

"You are from Castile?"

"Yes."

"May I know how to call you?"

"I am called Manfred del Alcala, and bear the knightly rank."

"And your friend?"

"Is the Count Guy of St. Mark."

The Moor presumed to ask no more, and presently Manfred ventured,—

"Since you know how to call me, will you return the favor, and suffer me to know whom I have so providentially met?"

The Moor hesitated; but only for an instant.

"You may call me *Abdalla*," he said. "I have answered to the name ere this. And now suppose I look to this shoulder of yours. A fresh compress will not be amiss."

And straightway, with gentle manipulation, he proceeded to loosen the wrapping, and to perform the operation which he had suggested.

Meantime Guy of St. Mark and Pedro had gone in quest of Michael, and after much searching they had found him, prone upon the ground, behind a dense thicket of underbrush. At first they thought full sure that he was dead, as he lay without life or motion. The marks of a severe conflict were to be seen in the torn turf, and in the beaten bushes, as well as in the gouts of blood which smeared the place; but only the body of the esquire was present. His antagonist had disappeared.

They took in the scene at a glance, and then knelt at the side of the fallen man, and soon discovered that the only wound he had received had been upon the head. It was a gash above the ear, cutting into the scalp, but, Guy was sure, not breaking into the skull. The blow had stunned merely, and it might have been that his antagonist had left him for dead. Pedro hastened away to the river, and brought water, and in time Michael returned to consciousness and sat up. A renewed application of water upon the wounded scalp, and the addition of a bandage, so far restored the injured man that he stood upon his feet and looked around.

"Where is Sir Manfred?" was his first question.

"He is alive, and near at hand," replied Guy.

"But he is sorely wounded."

"How know you?"

"Were it not so he would be here."

"True, good Michael, Sir Manfred is wounded; but not seriously, I trust. And now tell me,—whom met you here?"

If the esquire had any particular knowledge, or suspicion, he did not choose to communicate it to the Knight of St. Mark.

"As I followed in the steps of yourself and my master I was set upon in this place by a stout ruffian who sprang into my path, and halted me at the point of his sword. He would have prevented me from going further,—and, as it proved, he did prevent me; though I fancy he hath a gentle reminder of this day."

"Did you wound him?"

"Aye. He had been a dead man at the first passage but for a stout steel plate which he wore upon his breast. I gave him the lunge of St. Jude—the same which I taught to Sir Manfred,—but the breastplate saved him. I pricked his arm and his stomach, however, and in return he gave me this clout upon the head. He was a ready knave, and a soldier. Now lead me to my master; and let us both thank God that he hath his hurt from a Moor rather than from the hand of a Christian and a brother."

"Amen!" heartily responded Sir Guy, as he offered to assist the esquire to walk.

But Michael could walk very well alone. He was a little unsteady at first, but his strength soon returned to him. He reached the dell beneath the chestnuts, and was startled upon beholding his master so pale and weak. He bent over the sitting Knight, and when he had received assurance that the injury was not a serious one, he told the story of his own conflict.

"Did'st mark the man?" asked Abdalla.

Michael looked up, and for the first time obtained a fair view of the face of the Moor. He looked so earnestly, and so intently, that the Moslem smiled, and asked,—

"How now, my good man? Does my face interest you?"

"Pardon, noble sir. New faces, under strange circumstances, are apt to interest me."

Abdalla seemed not desirous to press the subject, but quickly bethought himself that his bugle call had not been answered, and again he raised the horn to his lips, and blew a loud blast.

This second call proved more effective than the first, for presently the coming tramp of horses was heard, and ere long three horsemen appeared, the foremost of whom was a man of fifty, or thereabouts, above the plainness of whose hunter's garb appeared the poise and the bearing of the noble.

"How now, my—"

Abdalla stopped him by an imperative wave of the hand, and then approached, and dropped a whispered word upon his ear; and then he asked,—

"How is it, Ben Ahmed,—did you not hear my first call?"

"Yes, my lord,—but we could not gain its direction. But—what is this? Who are these wounded men?—and how—"

Another wave of the hand, and Abdalla broke in,—

"There has been trouble, Ben Ahmed. I was set upon by robbers, and these good Christians came to my rescue."

"Robbers? Robbers in this place?"

"Yes. But I will explain particulars at another time. At present we must look to the assistance of this noble Knight, whose severe hurt was taken in my behalf. Ben Ahmed, I bespeak for him quarters in your house, as also for his esquire, who may need a little nursing."

Ben Ahmed bowed very low, and said it should be done as had been ordered.

Manfred would have opposed this arrangement, but Abdalla would not listen.

"Your wound is yet to give you trouble," the latter said, "and you will be better off at the house of Ben Ahmed than at a poor inn. And besides, your henchman is not going to be fit for your nurse for some days to come. That blow upon his head is to give him trouble."

"Not much, my lord, if I know myself," interposed Michael, with a nod of assurance. "It was a lusty stroke, but my skull is used to such visitations. However, my master, I am sure, will gladly accept the kindness thus offered. Seeing that he is weak and unseated, I will answer for him."

With matters thus arranged the party prepared for their return to the city. The horses were called, and Manfred was able to sit in his saddle, though Guy rode by his side, offering such support as was needed.

"Until you are strong again, and able to renew the combat," said St. Mark, "we will be as friends and brothers. It will be pleasanter so."

"Much pleasanter," answered Manfred, gratefully.

On the way Abdalla explained to Guy that he and his friends had been out for the purpose of hunting, when he had been separated from his companions, and attacked by robbers.

"And of what," asked Guy, looking in vain for jewel or any valuable ornament upon the Moor's person, "could they have hoped to rob you?"

"If I should ever chance to meet the rascals, Sir Guy, and have opportunity, I will ask them that question."

Guy blushed at this gentle reminder of his untimely curiosity, and smilingly said,—

"I trust you may meet them in the neighborhood of as true friends as were those who stood by you this morning, my lord."

"As I trust I may meet those same true friends often," rejoined Abdalla, pleasantly.

When they reached the city it was decided that Manfred and Michael should go on with Ben Ahmed; that Guy and Pedro should proceed to their own inn; while Abdalla, with his attendants, were left to pursue such course as might suit him.

Ben Ahmed led the way toward the best part of the city, and when he finally stopped it was before a fine house, near to the Alhambra wall. Servants came forth to wait upon him, and when he had directed that the two Christians should be kindly and carefully provided for, they were treated with distinguished respect. Manfred was quite weak from pain and loss of blood, and under direction of their master two of the servants bore him to a chamber where every convenience and comfort might be afforded, and as soon as possible an experienced physician was summoned.

Michael strongly urged that he might be allowed to accompany his master, but he was informed that that could not be until the physician had given permission.

"And, moreover," said the servant who had him in charge, "your own wound needs attending to. The physician will see you when he has done with the knight."

Michael was not willing to confess that his wound was of moment, though he was forced to admit to himself that his head felt far from comfortable. But, like a faithful soldier as he was, he yielded to authority, and suffered himself to be conducted to the chamber which had been set apart for his use, and which he found to be a great improvement upon his quarters at Otello's inn. It was not far from noon when the physician called upon him. This functionary was an elderly man, of benign aspect, and of more than ordinary intelligence. From his general knowledge of doctors Michael had tortured his imagination to an influx of noxious drugs and bitter draughts, which he had resolved to throw out at the window as soon as the leech's back was turned. But his present visitor prescribed nothing of the kind. He examined and dressed the wound, and recommended pure water inside and out. He would have the scalp bathed in cool water as often as there was any feeling of unnatural heat, and he would also have his patient abstain from wine for the present. This latter clause the esquire kicked at, but the physician was able to give such good and sufficient reason for the prohibition that the patient finally bowed in willing submission.

"By the way," said Michael, after he had been made comfortable, "I am enjoying the hospitality of a man whom I know not. Will you enlighten me?"

"You are in the house of Ben Ahmed," replied the physician, who seemed to have conceived a liking for the blunt, genial esquire, as he certainly had for the youthful Knight.

"But who is Ben Ahmed?" pursued Michael.

"He is a man pretty generally known in this region," said the leech,—"a man whom many love, and whom many greatly fear. He is the Alcaide of Granada."

"The Alcaide!" uttered Michael, in surprise. "The Governor of the city?"

"Both military and civil. He is Governor and Judge."

"And who, then, was the man to whom he paid deference—the man calling himself Abdalla?"

The physician shook his head.

"I cannot tell you, as I did not see the man. There are many, however, in Granada, to whom Ben Ahmed might pay deference—not the deference of homage, but of respect. But that is not my business; and I would advise you, if you expect to enjoy the Alcaide's hospitality, not to pry into his secrets."

Michael nodded, and presently asked when he could go to his master.

"Perhaps," returned the physician, "to-morrow; or, at all events, as soon as we are sure that no fever is to result to your wound; and to that end I would recommend complete quiet and repose for the present."

With this the doctor took his leave, and Michael was left alone with his thoughts. And his thoughts were somewhat troublesome. He had connected the man whom he had encountered in the forest with the man called Abdalla. He knew one to be a ruffian and a villain, and it greatly exercised his mind to guess what the other could be.

CHAPTER V.

AN ALARM.

Before night the pain in Michael's head had so far subsided that only a dull sense of tightness was felt where the scalp had been plastered up; and when the physician came in the early evening he consented that the tough old warrior should have a flagon of light wine by his bedside in place of the stagnant water. In answer to the esquire's inquiries concerning his master he was informed that the knight was beyond all danger from the immediate effects of the wound, though it was probable that fever would result, and how much prostration might follow it was impossible to say. The chances were, however, that Sir Manfred would not be confined beyond the period required for healing the cut in his shoulder.

Later in the evening—at an hour in which it might be supposed that all stragglers would have returned to their rest—the door of Michael's room was opened, and a servant looked in. In answer to the patient's demand of what was wanted the intruder only nodded, and immediately retired; but directly afterward a second person entered, and coming within the light of the lamp which burned upon a table near the bed, Michael saw that it was a man, of dignified bearing, enveloped in a long dark mantle.

"The physician assured me that my visit would not harm you," said the new-comer, removing the mantle from his shoulders.

Michael looked up as the mantle fell, and recognized the Moor Abdalla—the very man of whom he had been thinking.

"On the contrary," replied the esquire, good-naturedly, "the visit of anybody who comes in a friendly spirit can be only welcome."

"Did I not give to you of my very warmest friendship I should be an ingrate indeed," said Abdalla, seating himself by the bedside. "To your master I owe my life; and I think your interests are one with his."

"Of a truth they are; and a right noble and gallant master is he."

"Sir Manfred is of Castile?" said the Moor.

"Of Alcala," nodded Michael.

"He was born in Castile?" pursued Abdalla.

There was a marked interest in the Moor's manner as he asked this question, and Michael bethought himself before he answered. The hesitation was but for a moment, though during that moment the faithful and ready-witted esquire had resolved that he would not jeopardize his master by any needless disclosures.

"So the world believes, good sir," he said, with a smile. "I was not present at his birth, though he came into my charge when very young."

"And you know his parentage?"

"Yes. I served under Sir Gomez del Alcala before the child saw the light; and the Countess, his mother, was my friend."

The Moor sat for a time with his head bowed upon his hand, and Michael watched him with extreme interest. There was something grand and noble in the outline thus presented, and the face was peculiarly attractive. At length Abdalla looked up and moved his seat nearer to the bed.

"My good Michael," he said, with a new meaning in his look and tone, "I did not come hither to question you concerning your master. The thought was but an accident of the occasion. I came for information upon another matter. You were attacked in the forest this morning by a man who had not joined the band that set upon me?"

"Yes," replied the esquire. "He set upon me to prevent my following to the assistance of my comrades."

"And he had been hiding from observation?"

"I should judge so."

"You saw him plainly?"

"Yes."

"Can you tell me what manner of man he was?"

"He was a man tall and strong, of good proportions, and wearing a face which I should not hesitate to pronounce bold and bad, though it was a face which was by no means ugly."

"And his garb?" said the Moor, with increasing interest.

At this point Michael again considered. He was a stranger in a strange place, and it might not be well to mix unnecessarily in affairs which did not concern him. That the man who had attacked him in the wood was a villain he had no doubt, and he had no doubt that the man now before him was honest and true; and he was furthermore assured that the secret meeting of which he had been cognizant up by the wall of the court of the Alhambra was a part and parcel of the attack in the forest, and a revelation of the same to his visitor might help him in his search; but he concluded to volunteer nothing of the kind. He would answer no more than he was asked.

"His garb," said the esquire, looking up as though he had been engaged in calling the same to mind, "was such as any Moorish gentleman might wear, save that the ornamentation was somewhat elaborate. His jacket was of crimson velvet, heavily trimmed with gold; and I marked particularly a crescent upon his turban which gleamed with precious stones."

Abdalla arose and walked across the room, and Michael knew that he did this to hide an emotion which he cared not to expose. When he came back he was comparatively calm, but he did not resume his seat.

"Did this man let drop any word in your

hearing which could give you an understanding of his purpose?"

"Only that he purposed to stop me from following my friends."

"He said no more?"

"No more."

"Did you wound him?"

"Only slightly. I played for my favorite thrust, and when I had won the opportunity, and thought full sure my antagonist was a dead man, my point met a breastplate of steel, and glanced off through a bit of worthless flesh. The mishap so angered me that for the instant I lost my wit, and this blow upon the head was the result."

"Then you do not think you wounded him severely?"

"I think not. I think I have carried away cuts worse than his and thought nothing of them. He bled a little; but that oftentimes does a man good."

After a pause Abdalla reached out and took Michael's hand.

"My good friend, I thank you for the information you have given me, and if you remain long in Granada you shall not go unrewarded. But I have an additional favor to ask. Hold your silence upon this visit, and give to no one else the information touching that conflict in the forest which you have given to me."

"Must I hold it as a secret from my master?"

"I suppose you would feel better to be free with Sir Manfred?"

"He will naturally ask me as you have asked."

"He can be secret?"

"As the grave."

"Then be free with him; but speak of it to no one else."

Michael gave the required promise, and having once more expressed his thanks the Moor retired.

"By San Jago!" cried the esquire, sitting up in his bed, and looking hard at the vacant point where his mysterious visitor had disappeared, "I would like to know who that man is! If I have never before seen him, then I have seen somebody who looked wonderfully like him."

And Michael lay back upon his pillow and tried to connect the face of the Moor with some event of the past, and thus trying, without avail, he fell asleep.

On the following day the esquire found himself comparatively well. There was a slight pain in the head, and he had need of care; but the physician, upon considering the case, deemed that it might be better for the master that his faithful attendant should be with him, so Michael had permission to take up his quarters in the knight's chamber. As had been anticipated, the plan worked well. Sir Manfred revived wonderfully under the care of his long-tried friend and henchman, and on the third day he was permitted to sit up for half an hour.

It was on this same third day that Sir Guy, at his inn on the street of St. Omar, spoke of visiting Manfred. He was deeply exercised in mind concerning the matter. At heart he not only wished to know how it fared with Manfred, but he wished much to see him. He felt no enmity—he felt only friendship,—and yet, knowing that his hand was lifted against the Knight of Alcala, he knew not with what face he could approach the bed of the wounded man.

"I ought to see him," he said to Pedro, "and return to him the amulet which I removed from his bosom while he lay wounded in the forest. He may not know what has become of it."

"If it is your desire," suggested the esquire, "I will bear the jewel to Sir Manfred. Or, I will carry it to Michael."

"It must not be," returned Guy, shaking his head. "I took the jewel, and I must restore it. It is more valuable than you think. The diadem of Charlemagne contained not a stone so precious as is the red sapphire which sparkles in this regal star. And, moreover, I wish much to see Sir Manfred. I would know how long he is to be confined?"

"That you may know when the combat is to be renewed?" ventured Pedro.

"Even so," said Guy, with an uncomfortable expression. "I would that my hands were washed of this affair; but it cannot be done now save in blood."

"Cannot?"

"Dost not know the law, Pedro? Will I ever acknowledge that my sword has been drawn in an unholy cause?"

"Surely not, my master."

"And dost think Sir Manfred will ever make such acknowledgment?"

"I am sure not."

"Then how else can it be? The law of chivalry is imperative. The knight who appeals to the arbitrament of arms cannot honorably lay down his arms until the contest is decided. A case started in arms must be fought out. The knight who retreats or retracts after the first blow is struck is vanquished."

"But may there not be a mutual suspension?" queried Pedro.

"No," answered Guy.

The esquire started to express the opinion that such a law was unjust and arbitrary, but the knight cut him short.

"The law," he said, "was meant to be just and beneficent. It was to prevent a hasty and ill-judged appeal to combat. It was meant to lift the arms of the knight above all petty strife and wrangle. No, Pedro—we cannot forego the combat if we would. Still I will go and see Sir Manfred. I will go first and find the physician, and gain his permission."

Accordingly, toward evening, Sir Guy set forth in quest of the physician, but he found him not; and at length he concluded to venture upon the visit without the official consent. It had been dark for an hour or more when he approached the dwelling of Ben Ahmed, and several times he fancied that stealthy footsteps were following him. When he had reached the porch of the Alcaide's residence he stopped and turned, and distinctly saw two dark forms glide into the shadow of the wall. He waited a while, but the spectres did not reappear, and after a little hesitation he resolved to go back and examine. If these men were following him, he desired to know their object. As for fear, he was well armed, and could stand upon the defensive.

Guy drew his sword, and went back. At the point where the two men had disappeared he found a gate in the wall. He tried the latch, but it was fastened within.

Very likely they had been only servants of the household who had followed him; and with this reflection he returned to the vestibule of the house and knocked at the door. A servant answered the summons, and upon giving his name he was admitted to the hall, and very shortly afterward Michael presented himself, and conducted him to Manfred's chamber.

The meeting was cordial and cheerful. The Knight of Alcala was doing well, and Michael told him he might converse for fifteen minutes.

"At present," laughed Manfred, "Michael is master here. The physician has so installed him. But tell me," he added, more seriously, "have you seen my talisman since the morning of the forest encounter?"

"Aye, Manfred, I have it safe, and it was in part to restore it that I made this early visit. As you lay senseless in my arms I saw the gleaming jewel, and I deemed it best to remove it. I knew you held it as a sacred talisman, and I knew not what eyes might rest upon it if it remained exposed upon your bosom."

"My brother, I thank you!" cried Manfred, gratefully. "When Michael told me that he knew nothing of it, so assured was I that you had it that I made no further inquiries. It is indeed precious to me. I know not if it possesses the virtue which my mother would attribute to it, but it is to me a memento of her, and of all things I know on earth my mother is most sacred in my reverence and esteem."

He took the jewelled star from Guy's hand, and having pressed it to his lips he placed it beneath his pillow. And then, with a smile, he said,—

"Let us be friends for the time, Guy. I know that we must fight when my wound is well, and my body is strong; but we can let that go until the day shall come."

"With all my heart," responded he of St. Mark.

And thereupon followed a friendly chat, which was at length interrupted by Michael, who announced that the fifteen minutes had more than expired.

Guy had turned away when Manfred reached out his hand and called him back.

"Guy—as you have said, we must fight again. Our knightly vows bind us to the combat. I could not ask you to swerve, and I am sure you would not ask me. We have appealed to the arbitrament of the sword, and must abide the issue. But the time is not yet. I must get strong before I can wield the sword. While I lay here you will be my friend. Come to me when you can. I am lonesome here."

Guy grasped the extended hand, and promised that he would come,—and his manner gave clear proof that the promise came from his heart.

Michael now took a lighted lamp, and proposed to guide the visitor to the outer door. Manfred suggested that one of the servants had better be called; but the esquire preferred not to call upon another to perform that which he felt fully competent to perform himself.

Passing out from Manfred's chamber they entered upon a corridor overlooking the inner court of the house. It was an easy matter for Michael to find the stairs leading downward; and having reached the court it was very easy to find a door opening outward; but, as there were several of these doors, it was not so easy to determine which communicated with the vestibule upon the street. At length, however, the volunteer guide hit upon the way which he was sure was the right one. He remembered the door very well. He removed the fastenings, and upon opening it, he found the vestibule without.

"All right!" said he, to Sir Guy. "Here you are. You will have no difficulty now."

"None whatever," replied Guy.

Michael held his light until the knight had stepped out into the open porch, and then he reclosed and fastened the door, and returned to his master.

Guy of St. Mark found no difficulty at all in making his way out from the porch; but when he had descended the steps, instead of finding himself in the street, he found himself in a garden. The heavens were clear, and the stars shone brightly, and the Castilian could plainly see the outlines of the trees and shrubbery, and could detect the gleaming of the white-sanded walks that branched off in various directions from the open area at the foot of the steps. He also heard the play of fountains, and caught the bright sparkling of a star-gemmed jet that tossed up its crystal drops close at hand. After reflecting a while, and making sure that he was really in the garden, he concluded that there was left him but one course to pursue. He must regain admittance to the house, and find the proper way to the street.

The knight had reached the steps, and was about to return to the porch, when his ear caught a sound as of smothered voices not far away. He stopped and listened, and directly he heard the cry of a female. It was as though she had given form to a cry of alarm, and had been suddenly gagged. He could not be mistaken. There was a pathos in the choking sound that thrilled to every fibre of his being. He heard the smothered cry again, and this time he heard the voice of a man in tones of threat and expostulation.

As we have already seen, Guy of St. Mark was not a man to know fear when duty called. And what duty so near to the well-kept faith of a loyal knight as the succor of suffering woman? He made sure of the direction of the alarm, and then, with drawn sword and eager step, he hastened forward to the rescue.

CHAPTER VI.

A DOUBLE ADVENTURE.

The heavens were so clear, and the stars so bright, that the Knight of St. Mark had no difficulty in making his way by the tortuous path, nor was he at a loss concerning the character of objects near at hand. There was a luminosity in the atmosphere, almost like moonlight, and the Castilian, long and skilfully used to the sharp-sighted needs of the deep passes and fastnesses of the Guadaramas, was likely to be led into no blunder through obtuseness of vision. Twice, after he left the dwelling, did the smothered cry for help give him guidance, and ere long he emerged upon an open space near the garden wall where the cause of the disturbance was plainly distinguishable. He saw two stout men, and between them was a female whom they were dragging toward a wicket in the wall. With a loud cry the knight sprang in before the party, and commanded them to halt.

The ruffians stopped, and again the female called for help; but her cry was quickly hushed. One of the men placed a hand over her mouth and held her fast, while his companion drew his sword and advanced.

"Who art thou?" the man demanded, angrily. He was a Moor, of strong and bulky frame, and wore a mask upon his face.

"I am a Knight, and a Christian!" replied Guy; "and as such I come to the rescue of the woman who hath summoned me."

"She summoned not thee, thou dog of a Christian! Get thee gone!"

"Ha! Dost hear that?" cried Guy, as the struggling female again found voice. "By the help of God and St. Mark I'll answer her appeal for succor."

"Have a care!" hissed the Moor.

"Have thou a care!" retorted Guy. And he advanced as he spoke, and presented the point of his sword.

The Moor was flushed and angry, and, moreover, in great haste; while the Christian was calm and collected, with only a self-imposed duty on his hands. The result was speedy. The Moslem made a furious onslaught, and quicker than it takes to write it the sword of the Christian had passed through his body. Guy withdrew his blade, and hurled the staggering man to the earth, and then sprang forward to where the second ruffian held the female.

Ruffian number two had seen his companion fall, and as the Knight approached him he let go his hold upon his charge and started back. Whether he feared the encounter, or whether he deemed the risk too great for the reward of victory, we cannot say; but no sooner had the Christian champion come within a sword's length than he turned and fled, and Guy caught the lady in his arms to prevent her from falling.

Further thought of the villains whom he had so readily overcome was driven from the Knight's mind by the new need that was upon him. The lady, with a sobbing cry, clung to him, and implored his protection. Her voice, even in its agony, was as sweet as the notes of the flute, and he saw and felt that her form was the *form of a peri*—warm and full in its *perfection of outline, and graceful as the fabled sylph.*

"Fear not, dear lady," he said, as he supported her. "I will answer for your safety with my life."

The words reassured her; but her strength had been too severely taxed to permit her to support herself, and she manifested her confidence in her champion's faith by sinking upon his bosom.

At first Guy thought the lady had fainted, but he soon satisfied himself that it was only extreme exhaustion, and lifting her in his arms he bore her toward the house. At the foot of the steps leading up to the porch he stopped, and by the light of a lamp which was suspended beneath the balcony he gained a view of the face of his precious charge. It was a youthful face—the face of a maiden just blushing into womanhood—and as beautiful as the fairest houri that ever blessed the enraptured dreams of the faithful Moslem.

In all his life—in all his visions of loveliness—Guy had never seen anything so divinely fair and entrancing. A very halo of celestial grace gave radiance to every feature, and a seraphic bloom enriched and warmed the whole. The Knight gazed as one spell-bound, and not until the maiden opened her eyes and looked up was the spell broken. And even then the charm was troubled only to sink more deeply into his soul. The light of the lustrous eyes, deep, soft and ardent, shone upon him with ravishing power, and the impassioned shock reached to his heart. For the first time in his life he felt the rapturous intoxication of love. Deep down into the very essence of his being descended the transporting emotion, and every thought of life seemed in one brief moment to have become centred in the angelic being which he held in his arms.

The maiden looked up and met the gaze of the Knight. And she too gazed upon a handsome face. It was a face brave and kind—a face upon which was stamped the very highest type of manly beauty—a face giving token of strength, and force, and truth. Her senses had not so far failed her but that she knew she was supported by the man who had preserved her, and she showed no sign of fear.

"Dear lady," spoke Guy—he could not subdue the ardor that welled up from his throbbing heart—"I trust harm hath not come to you."

"Only the harm of a great fear," she replied. She gazed up into his face again, and then, dropping her eyes, while a slight flush suffused her cheeks, she gently disengaged herself from his embrace.

"Are you strong enough for your own support, lady?"

With quick perception she marked the shadow which her movement had called to her preserver's face, and putting forth her hand, she said,—

"Thanks to your noble assistance, kind sir, I am."

He took the proffered hand, and raised it to his lips, and the maiden did not shrink from the token.

Presently he asked,—

"Is this your home, fair lady"

"It is," she answered.

"May I know whom I have succored?"

"Surely, brave sir," she returned, warmly, "you have that right. I am Miriam, the daughter of Ben Ahmed.—And thou?"

"I am Guy of St. Mark, a Christian knight of Castile."

The maiden looked up with an expression of pleasure and satisfaction, showing that the announcement had given her new cause of gratitude.

"Thou art the brave Knight who came to the help of my father in the forest—the friend of Sir Manfred, who now lies beneath our roof."

"I met thy father in the forest, dear lady; though it was his friend, and not himself, whom I served."

"And in serving the friend you served him, as did your brave companion who suffered from Calib's blow."

A pain shot through Guy's heart—a pain such as he had never before experienced,—and it came from the simple mention by those lips of the name of his companion.

"You have seen Manfred?" he said.

"No," she answered. "My duty has not called me to visit him."

The pain departed as quickly as it had come. He took the lady's hand to lead her toward the steps, and as he did so he asked her if she could explain the intent of the ruffians from whom he had rescued her.

"I am convinced," she replied, "that they were the tools of the Prince Haroun."

"Prince Haroun?" repeated Guy, in surprise. "I have heard of him as a brave and accomplished knight—"

"But," interposed Miriam, "he is at the same time heartless and unscrupulous. He is a plotter and a base man."

"He is a nephew of the King?" suggested Guy.

"Yes," nodded the lady; "and he seeks my hand in marriage."

In an instant the nephew of the King was transformed into a very demon in St. Mark's estimation, and was, henceforth, to be held as a deadly enemy.

"And you will not marry him?"

"I cannot. I loathe and detest him. He is a man of a bad heart."

"Thank God I have helped you to escape him! And God grant, should the need ever come, I may be near to help you again."

"Good, kind sir, you have my poor gratitude in fullest measure."

Impulsively she put her hand forth again as she spoke, and as impulsively Guy grasped it, and carried it again to his lips. Their eyes met, and under the force of an emotion which the knight could no more have controlled than he could have hushed the beatings of his own heart, he caught the lovely damsel to his bosom.

"Fair lady," he cried, holding her in his enraptured embrace, "my life is dedicated to thy service! May kind Heaven give me further boon of the blessed privilege!"

"Not to thine own danger, fair sir, I most devoutly pray," returned the maid, again disengaging herself from the knight's embrace.

The flush upon her cheek was not of shame, nor was the light of her wondrous eyes of anger. She allowed Sir Guy to hold her hand, even yet, and the manner in which she returned his admiring gaze plainly told that the mystic depths of her virgin heart had been touched by the erotic dart.

"Dear lady," spoke the knight, in solemn accents, "while men are eager to expose life in a bad cause, bending their hearts to the attainment of ignoble purposes, do not forbid me to pledge myself to a cause so just and so pure. I offer thee my service without guile, calling on God to witness that I will hold thine honor above all other considerations of earth!"

He pressed her hand once more to his lips, and then, with an awakening sense of what was due to the situation, he said,—

"I will now conduct thee to the porch, and deliver thee to those who have a right to be anxious in thy behalf."

At the door, ere he had sounded the alarm, he added,—

"Would the expression of the hope that I might see thee again offend thee?"

"No," she answered, without looking up.

He felt her hand tremble in his grasp, and he was sure that her lip quivered. He dared ask no more. He had asked enough. In the mysterious language of the soul he had read that his love might not be in vain.

He knocked upon the door with the pommel of his dagger, and ere long a servant answered his call. Then came another servant, and then a third, and finally the Alcaide himself, attracted by the unusual commotion, appeared upon the scene. He beheld his daughter, and he beheld the Castilian knight, and with great wonder in look and tone he asked the meaning of what he saw.

Miriam hastened to him, and threw her arms about his neck, and when he had returned her embrace, and tenderly kissed her upon the brow, she told to him the story.

She had been walking upon the balcony beneath her window, when two men had sprang up and seized her and dragged her away. They were large, strong men, and wore masks upon their faces. They had told her that she must go with them, and they would do her no harm. They had stopped her cries with their hands, and had gained the garden wall, when the Castilian knight appeared upon the scene and rescued her.

Ben Ahmed turned his gaze upon Sir Guy.

"Doubtless," said the Knight, smiling, "your lordship wonders how I chanced to be in the garden."

The Alcaide nodded.

"Not with thought of blame," he said; "but the walls are high, and the gates should be locked."

"This evening," explained Guy, "I came to visit Sir Manfred, and when I would retire, our good Michael essayed to conduct me. He was sure he knew the way. In the court he was puzzled, but finally hitting upon a door which appeared to him to be the right one he let me out. Arriving at the foot of the steps I discovered that I was in the garden instead of in the street, and as I was upon the point of returning I heard the cry of a female voice for help. The rest you can readily imagine."

Ben Ahmed grasped the Knight's hand, and was profuse in his thanks.

"By my life," he cried, "we of Granada are to be indebted to yourself and your companion for much—for more, perhaps, than you imagine. But of these ruffians,—you saw not their faces?"

"They wore masks, my lord, and were certainly strangers to me."

Ben Ahmed turned to his daughter.

"The voice of one," said Miriam, "sounded like a voice I have heard in the lists—like the voice of Al Modi."

"Of Al Modi!" repeated the Alcaide, quivering,—"The henchman of Haroun?"

"The same, my father."

"I bethink me," cried the Castilian, "that I left one of the ruffians extended upon the earth with a hole through his body. If he is not gone, his face may be seen."

The Alcaide called for a lantern, and when it had been brought they went out into the garden, and Guy led the way to the spot where he had rescued the maiden. They found a pool of blood, and they found tracks leading to where a ladder had been set up against the wall; but the man who had been wounded was not there. Either he had crawled away of his own accord, or, what Guy deemed more probable, his companion had returned and removed him. At all events, no further traces of the ruffians were to be found, and at length the party returned to the house.

The Alcaide was too well bred, and held too high an opinion of the knight's character, to offer any material reward for the service rendered. He again expressed his gratitude, and desired that Sir Guy should regard his house as always open to him.

"You have saved to me a treasure which is beyond all price," he said, in conclusion, "and I give you my heart in return."

Guy looked around in the hope that he might see Miriam once more before he departed; but she had retired to her own apartments, so he could only bear away with him the memory of what had already transpired. But that was sweet, and he held it very near and dear to his heart.

Ben Ahmed, with a better knowledge of the premises than Michael had possessed, made no mistake in the door, and as he himself lighted his guest on his way, the Knight soon found the street, and with renewed thanks for a repeated offer of hospitality he descended the steps, and turned toward his inn.

The street of St. Omar, upon which Yezid's inn was situated, was in the older part of the city, on the plain, and distant a mile, or more, from the dwelling of the Alcaide. But Guy did not hurry. No sooner did he find himself alone in the deserted thoroughfare upon the slope of the Alhambran hill than his thoughts reverted to the beautiful maiden whom he had that night rescued from ruffianly hands—the maiden whose hand he had pressed to his lips—the maiden whom he had held to his palpitating bosom. A feeling new and ecstatic had possessed him. Bold and strong as he was, with the best blood of Castile in his veins, he felt that every sense of his being had become centred in love and adoration of the Moorish maiden. Not only had her surpassing beauty captivated him, but the charm of her manner, and the sweet music of her voice, had helped in the inthrallment. He was resolved that he would see her again; and the wild hope was cherished that he might win her for his own. Christian knights had ere this espoused Moorish maidens, and he believed that Miriam was as gentle in station as she was pure of heart.

Thus was the Knight meditating when his attention was arrested by the sound of footsteps behind him, and, not caring to be overtaken by strangers, he quickened his pace, upon which the pace of the pursuers was also quickened. He turned his head, and saw two men not far distant. He crossed over to the opposite side of the street, and when he next looked back the men had disappeared. Though inclined to smile at the thought of danger, he could not forget a warning which Manfred had given him that very evening. His friend had warned him that he must be careful how he trusted himself alone at night in the streets of Granada. Their adventure in the forest had led them into conflict with men who might be both revengeful and powerful.

Guy thought of this, and he also thought of the new adventure, by which he had possibly thrust his sword through the body of an emissary of a Moorish prince. He looked back once more, but saw nothing of the men who had seemed to hang upon his steps, and presently afterward he recrossed the street toward the corner of the way he was to take into the lower town. He had reached the angle of a low, vine-clad wall, when a man suddenly appeared before him, and commanded him to halt.

"What now?" demanded Guy, attempting to draw his sword.

Before the weapon had left its scabbard he was sensible of a movement above him, and before he could leap away to avoid the result, a second man sprang down from the wall upon him, bearing him to the pavement. In the heat of the occasion, being borne down by two heavy men, the knight shouted his old war cry of "*St. Mark to the rescue!*" upon which the foremost of the ruffians, evidently thinking it best not to have the cry repeated, gave him a blow upon the head, which, for a time, utterly bereft him of sense.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SECRET OF A LONG LIFE.

My Uncle Daniel Smith, of Oxford, Maine, was most emphatically a man of regular and precise habits. I was intimate with him for years—spending days beneath his own roof, and he sojourned for brief seasons with me—and I never saw him in a passion, nor heard him speak in an excited tone of voice, though I have heard him say bitter and cutting things. His religious instincts led him Quakerward, and if he had one political item of faith stronger than another it was Universal Peace.

I was one time talking with his son, Mark P., of the old man's habits and temperament, and I said,—"Really, Mark, you are in body older than your father."

"And well I may be," said he. "I have done more hard work than father ever did."

"And yet," said I, "Uncle Daniel has never been an idle man."

"No," replied Mark,—"he was never idle; but I never knew him to hurry. I remember when father was the only shoemaker in our district. No matter what was the work on hand, nor how many feet were bare, when his proper hours for labor were done, off went his apron, and his season of rest was his own. I call to mind a certain occasion when we were at work in the hay-field. We had a large lot of valuable hay down, and spread upon the ground, sufficiently cured to carry in. We were raking it up, and there were signs of rain. Father was ahead of me, and I called to him to hurry. I called to him a second time—and my impatience was manifest. 'For mercy's sake, father! can't you hurry up just a little? Don't you see those clouds over the hill? The rain will catch us!'

"He stopped—he was not more than forty then—and, setting the tail of his rake upon the ground, he turned and answered me.

"'Mark,' said he, 'I have nothing to do with the rain,—I have only myself to be answerable for. *God has given me just my share of strength, and it must last me my lifetime. I can't waste it now!*'

"I don't remember of ever trying to hurry him again."

I saw my Uncle Daniel, at the age of eighty-seven, swinging a scythe upon the very piece of intervale where his son had sought in vain to hurry him seven-and-forty years before. He passed away beyond the vale two years ago, at the ripe old-age of ninety-six. C.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A MODEL obituary notice is thus given in an Arkansas paper of a recently deceased fellow-citizen: "Mrs. ——— died in the spring of 1867, since which sad event Mr. ———'s footsteps have echoed down the corridors of time alone, waiting for the summons to cross the dark valley to the other shore, which came at last, and he went—life breathed out like the wafting of an evening breeze—happy to think he'd never had a sick day in all his life—our loss is his gain."

AN English snob, who was walking up and down the piazza of a hotel in a Western village, turning up his nose at everything, said to a speculator in corner lots who happened to cross his path, "That was a hawful peal of thunder you 'ad 'ere last night." "Well, yes," replied the Westerner, taking in the Englishman's style at a glance, "we did think it pretty well, considering that our town 's only three years old, and has but eighteen hundred inhabitants!"

A YOUNG lady who has been suddenly lifted from hereditary poverty to opulence by an alliance with money and old-age, called the attention of her mother to one of her wedding presents in the shape of a beautiful cluster diamond pin. The old lady dropped her spectacles to the end of her nose and exclaimed, "*That* a di'mond pin! Lor' sakes alive, I thought it was an old seed wart!"

"MR. JANES," said a clergyman, on a pastoral visit, "I don't see you and Mrs. Janes at church, Sunday evenings." "Well, no," replied Mr. Janes; "my wife has to stay home to take care of the children, and as it comes rather hard on her, I stay to keep her company." "Why, how is that? Don't you keep any servants?" "O yes, we keep two; but they don't allow us any privileges."

AN editor in Victoria, Australia, says, "The people of this region have become so virtuous and well-behaved that it is impossible for us to make an interesting daily paper. We hear that a ship-load of convicts is on the way to our virtuous port, and we look for greater activity in our local news department, as soon as its passengers shall get fairly ashore."

TOUCHING INSTANCE OF ASPIRATION FOR KNOWLEDGE.—*Time, Night.* Luna and several stars studding the blue vault. Youth and maiden leaning over a gate, and looking at the heavenly orbs. Maiden, filled with enthusiasm, points a taper finger toward the zenith, and exclaims, "Oh, Henry, let *us* study *botany!*"

A LATE number of the London *Times* had an advertisement stating that Mr. Moon, who died in 1858, "is required to come forward and prove his decease," and that "he is requested to communicate with his father's solicitors." Moon, however, does not "come forward," but remains under a total eclipse.

SCENE in a horse-car—Car stops; smiling young lady enters; every seat full; an old gentleman rises at the other end of the car. "O, don't rise," says the lovely girl, "I can just as well stand." "You can do as you please about that, Miss," says the old man, "but *I'm going to get out.*"

A DENTIST presented a bill, for the tenth time, to a rich skinflint. "It strikes me," said the latter, "that this is a pretty round bill." "Yes," replied the dentist, "I've sent it round often enough to make it appear so, and I have called now to get it squared."

As a wife was holding her husband's aching head in her hands, one morning, she asked, "Are a man and his wife one?" "I suppose so," said the husband. "Then," rejoined the wife, "I came home drunk last night, and ought to be ashamed of myself."

A LITTLE girl, who has been much exercised in mind in regard to the horrors of steam-boiler explosions, has hit upon a sure plan for preventing them in future: to wit, "Fill the boiler with ice-water and set it in a cool place."

A FASHIONABLE mother's advice to a newly married daughter: "Do not get in the habit of taking your husband with you to evening parties. Nothing is so stupid as a husband at a party, nor so everlastingly in the way."

WE see that those wells in different parts of the country which "have not run dry for fifty years," are now giving out rapidly, as is always the case at this season of the year, and in fact at nearly all seasons.

THERE is a certain kind of man whom nobody is apt to know in adversity, and that is he who is so proud that he never knows anybody in prosperity.

MEN of *might* are said to be those who can but won't help a fellow-mortal.

CURRENT ITEMS.

THE Texan stock raisers, having had their patience exhausted by Mexican cattle thieves, have resolved to declare war on their own account unless our Government will guarantee them protection. There are a good many thousand of the stock raisers who are dead shots, accomplished horsemen, and tough campaigners, and would make the finest irregular cavalry in the world. It would go hard with the Mexicans if those wild riders should be let loose upon them.

A FEARFUL statement comes over from Europe that Moltke, the great Prussian strategist, is holding an army of eight hundred thousand men in hand, ready to hurl them upon France in case anything happens there to interfere with the payment of the French indemnity to Prussia, and that the intention is to precipitate a seeming necessity for the re-occupancy of France by the Prussian forces.

IT is stated that a Digger Indian boy, about fourteen years of age, employed on a sheep ranch, in Montery county, Cal., herds about one hundred sheep, and knows every one of them by sight. When he brings them home at night, he is able to tell, without counting, whether any is missing.

WHILE a comedy was being performed recently in a theatre in Sheffield, England, a terrible tragedy was enacted behind the scenes, where a watchman named Bradshaw killed his wife in a dressing-room with a hatchet, and then hung himself from the flies. Jealousy was the cause.

DURING the cold snap which began on the evening of the fourth of March and lasted about eighty hours, thirteen deaths by freezing are reported in New England, New York and Ohio. How many persons were frozen to death whose cases are not reported, is of course unknown.

ACCORDING to a record kept in Philadelphia, the mean temperature during February, in that city, was 32:62 degrees, which is the lowest average since 1825. Rain fell on four days only, and snow on two. The total rain depth for the month was only one inch.

THE cashier of the First National Bank of Tarrytown, N. Y., lately missed a five-hundred-dollar bill, which was in a drawer when he went to dinner. A few days after, a woman engaged in cleaning out a closet in the bank, found the bill partly drawn into a mouse hole.

A COUPLE of California gold diggers lately fought a duel blindfold, with rifles, at thirty paces. They were allowed to take a good look at one another before their eyes were covered, so as to get the range. They did their best to kill, but neither party was hurt.

AN Arkansas telegraph operator sent a dispatch to a Memphis firm, instructing them, as from a responsible bank, to pay three hundred dollars to one Morgan, and then going to Memphis he claimed to be Morgan, and received the money.

A NEW HAMPSHIRE lady, sixty-five years old, while cheerfully chatting with her grandchildren, a few days ago, suddenly stopped, then exclaimed, "How strange my heart feels," and died in a few minutes.

A YOUNG lady in Tennessee recently walked twenty miles to attend to some business, and afterward walked back home. She said the task was no harder to accomplish than to do a day's washing.

As two inmates of the Massachusetts House of Correction were wrestling recently, for pastime, one of them suddenly gave a groan and fell dead. The cause of his death was not ascertained.

A YOUNG man, twenty-one years of age, was injured in a railroad accident at Framingham, a few days ago, so that it became necessary to amputate his leg, and he died from the operation.

IN 1768, the clock on the Old South Church, Boston, was purchased for three hundred dollars and was put in its place, where it has stood for one hundred and four years.

WHILE a brakeman was coupling cars on the Passumpsic Railroad, he was caught between two of them, at the breast, and was crushed to death, dying in horrible agony.

AS some men who did not understand the business, were lately preparing a blast in Trigg county, Ky., it exploded prematurely and killed three of them.

IT is estimated that in the late war between France and Germany only one ball in every two hundred and fifty that were fired hit a man.

WEST NORTHFIELD, Mass., had eighty days of continuous cold weather and sleighing this season. It has an appropriate name.

O, YE MYRIAD FLOWERS!

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Ceaseless thanks unto Him, O ye myriad flowers!
For blooming thus by the way-side or in bowers,
So sweet in your fragrance, so rich in your dyes,
And such symbols of Life in Eternity's skies!

What miracles ye in each delicate line!
What poems in their serene silence divine!
And yet the divineness not lost when the breeze
Makes the flowers a harp breathing soft harmonies.

Ceaseless thanks unto Him, O ye myriad flowers!
And gratitude grows when we know Heaven's bowers
Are full of those flowers from whence ye were born,
At His light-flashing word, in Creation's grand morn.

Yes, there in the Heavens those flowers still shine,
Perfuming the mansions forever divine,
And there the saved spirits weave wreaths free from earth;
O that we may with them crown Paradise-worth!

◆

BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "SELF-MADE," "THE BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER XCI.

VICTOR AND ELECTRA.

Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
Some lucky revolution of their fate;
Whose motions, if we watch and guide with skill—
For human good depends on human will—
Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent,
And from a first impression takes its bent;
But if unseized, she glides away like wind,
And leaves repenting folly far behind.
Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize,
And spreads her locks before her as she flies.
DRYDEN.

The next morning, at the appointed hour, the Rev. Mr. Lyle and Victor Hartman left their hotel together, and went to Mrs. Wheatfield's, to escort the ladies to the University, where Dr. Jones and Alden Lytton were to meet them and introduce them to the president. The two gentlemen found the young ladies already dressed and waiting.

Miss Cavendish explained that her aunt did not care about seeing more of the University than she had already seen, and preferred to remain in the house with the bishop's widow and rest that day.

And so, under the circumstances, they—Miss Cavendish and her young friends—had decided not to have a carriage, but to take advantage of the fine morning and walk the short mile that lay between the village and its great seat of learning.

Nothing could have pleased their escorts better than this plan.

And soon they—the party of five—set out upon the pleasant country road that led out to the University.

Emma Cavendish and Laura Lytton led the way, and by Laura's side walked the Rev. Mr. Lyle. Electra dropped a little behind, and was attended by Victor Hartman.

They talked of the fine morning and of the beautiful country, of the grand Commencement of the preceding day and of the University they were going to see, but they talked in an absent-minded manner, as if indeed they were both thinking of something else.

This lasted until they were half way to the place, when at length Electra turned suddenly upon Victor, and said:

"Do you know, Mr. Brent, that your face seems a very familiar one to me?"

"Indeed!" said Victor, bending his head nearer to her.

"Yes, indeed. Your face struck me as being familiar the first moment I saw you, and this impression has grown deeper every moment we have been walking together; and now I *know* of whom you remind me," answered Electra. And then she paused and looked at him.

He made no remark.

"You do not care to know who that was, it seems," she said.

"O yes, I do, I assure you, Miss Coroni, if you please to tell me."

"Then you remind me of a poor lad whom I once knew and liked very much in New York, when I was as poor as himself," said Electra meaningly.

"It is very kind of you to remember the poor lad, after so many years and so many changes," replied Victor.

"I wonder if that poor lad ever thinks of *me*, 'after so many years and so many changes?'" murmured Electra musingly.

"I don't know. Tell me his name, and then perhaps I can answer your question. I have roamed around the world a good deal, and seen a great many different sorts of people. Who knows but I may have met your poor lad? Let us have his name," said Victor gravely.

They were both, to use a household phrase, "beating about the bush."

"Oh, he was too poor to own a name. But he was cook's boy on board a merchantman, and they called him 'Galley Vick.' I never knew him by any other name. Did you ever see him at all?"

"Oh, yes, I've seen him! A good-for-nothing little vagabond he was! No, I don't suppose he ever dares to think about such a fine young lady as you are. But he cherishes the memory of a poor little girl he once knew in Rat Alley, New York. And only the day before yesterday, when I happened to be with him, he was saying how much he would give to know what had become of that poor little girl."

"Yes, it was very nice of him to remember her," said Electra musingly.

"You say that you knew the poor lad in New York. Perhaps, as they were so much together, you may have known the poor little girl also?" said Victor.

"I cannot tell you unless you give me her name. There were so many poor little girls in New York," answered Electra, shaking her head.

"*She*, like the boy, was too poor then to own a name. They called her 'Sal.'s Kid.' I never knew her by any other name," answered Victor.

And then their eyes met, and both laughed and impulsively put out their hands, which were then clasped together.

"I knew you at the very first sight, Vick," said Electra, giving full way to her feelings of pleasure in meeting her old playmate again.

"And so did I you. Heaven bless you, child! I am so happy and thankful to find you here, so healthy and prosperous. You were a sickly, poor little thing when I knew you," said Victor, with much emotion.

"I was a famished poor little thing, you mean. Food has made all the difference, Victor," laughed Electra.

"My name is Joseph Brent, my dear," said Hartman, who almost trembled to hear the old name spoken.

"Ah, but 'Sal.'s Kid' knew you only as 'Galley Vick.' I thought Vick was the short for Victor. But it seems you really had a name all the time as well as I had, though neither of us suspected we possessed such an appendage."

Hartman bowed in silence.

"And now I suppose you would like to know how it happens, that you find poor little ragged, famished, sickly 'Sal.'s Kid,' who used to live in Rat Alley among the thieves and tramps, *here*—well lodged, well dressed and in good company?"

"Yes, I really would."

"Well, it was 'all along of' a grandfather."

"A grandfather!"

"Yes, a grandfather. I really had a grandfather! And I have him *still*. And you have seen him, and his name is Dr. Beresford Jones. And moreover, I had a great-grandfather back of *him!* and also forefathers behind *them*, and ancestors extending away back to antiquity. In fact I think they ran away back to Adam."

"I dare say they did," answered Victor with a smile; "but tell me about that grandfather."

"Well, you must know that he was wealthy. He owned Beresford Manors. He had one child, 'sole daughter of his house.' She married a poor young Italian music-master against her father's will. Her father cast her off. Her husband took her to New York, where they fell by degrees into the deepest destitution. They both died of cholera, leaving me to the care of the miserable beings who were their fellow-lodgers in the old tenement house. I believe I was passed from the hands of one beggar to those of another, until my identity was lost and my real name fogotten. But I do not clearly remember any of my owners except Sal. And I was called 'Sal.'s Kid.'"

"It was then I knew you," said Victor.

"So it was. Well, you know all about that period. It was soon after you went to sea that Sal.'s husband, being mad with drink and jealousy, struck his wife a fatal blow and killed her."

"Horrible!"

"Yes, horrible! I have heard since that the man died of mania-a-potu in the Tombs, before his trial came on."

"And you?"

"I was taken by the Commissioners of Charity and put into the Orphan Asylum at Randall's Island."

"And how did your grandfather ever find you there, where your very name was lost?"

"You may well ask that. My name was lost. I suppose, hearing me called 'Sal.'s Kid,' they mistook that for Sal. Kidd. Any way, they registered my name on the books of the Island as Sarah Kidd."

Victor laughed at this piece of ingenuity on the part of the authorities, and again expressed wonder as to how her grandfather ever found her.

"If I were a heathen, I should say he found me by chance. It looked like it. You see, he had met with misfortunes. His wife, my grandmother, died. And he was growing old, and his home was lonely, and his life was dreary. And so he relented toward his poor daughter, and even toward her husband."

"But too late!" put in Victor.

"Yes; too late. He relented too late," sighed Electra. "He went to New York, where they had been living when he had last heard of them, and after making the most diligent inquiries, he only learned that they had been dead several years, and had left an orphan girl in great destitution. Well, he advertised for that child, offering large rewards for her discovery."

"But in vain, I suppose?" said Victor.

"Ah, yes, in vain; for I was at Randall's Island and registered under another name."

"The case seemed hopeless," said Victor.

"Entirely hopeless. And then, partly from his disappointment, and partly from seeing so much of suffering among children, he became a sort of city missionary. It was in his character of missionary that he went one day to an examination of the pupils of the girls' school on Randall's Island. There he saw me, and recognized me by my striking likeness to my mother. Indeed he has since told me that I am a counterpart of what my mother was at my age."

"And your face is such a very peculiar, and I may say unique face, that the likeness could not have been accidental, I suppose," observed Victor.

"That is what he thought. Well, without saying a word to me then, of his recognition, he commenced with the slight clue that he had in his hands, and pursued investigations that in a few days proved me to be the child of Sebastian and Electra Coroni. Then he came to the Island and took me away, and put me to school at Mount Ascension. There I made the acquaintance of the young lady friend that I am now staying with. Miss Cavendish is my cousin. Last month I graduated from Mount Ascension. And on the first of next month I am going to Beresford Manors, to commence my new life there as my grandfather's housekeeper. And, Victor—I beg your pardon—Mr. Brent, I hope that you will come and visit us there," concluded Electra, with a smile.

"But how would your grandfather, Dr. Beresford Jones of Beresford Manors, take a visit from a poor adventurer like me?" inquired Victor.

"He will take it very kindly; for he also will ask you to come," said Electra.

Victor bowed, and walked on in silence.

Electra spoke again:

"I have told you without reserve how it was that I was so suddenly raised from extreme poverty to wealth, and now—" She paused and looked at her companion.

"And now you want to know how I came by my fortune?" smilingly inquired Victor.

"Yes, of course I do," answered Electra.

"The explanation is short and simple enough. I became suddenly rich, as some few other poor vagabonds have, by a fortunate stroke of the pick—by a California gold mine," quietly answered Victor.

"Oh!" exclaimed Electra.

And she stopped and put him away from her a step, and stood and stared at him.

Victor laughed. And then they went on, for their companions were at the gates of the University, waiting for them to come along.

They entered the beautiful grounds occupied by the extensive buildings of the University, and where several of the Professors, as well as a few of the students who had not yet left for the vacation, were taking their morning walks.

The visitors were soon met by Dr. Jones and Alden Lytton, who came up together to welcome them.

After the usual greetings, Alden introduced his party to several of the Professors, who received them with great courtesy, and attended them through the various buildings, pointing out to them the most notable objects of interest, and entertaining them with the history, statistics and anecdotes of the institution.

They were taken into the various libraries, where they saw collected vast numbers of the most valuable books, among which were a few very unique black letter and illuminated volumes, of great antiquity.

They were then led into the several halls, where were collected costly astronomical and chemical apparatus.

And finally they visited the museum, filled with cabinets of minerals, shells, woods, fossils, and so forth.

And after an interesting, but very fatiguing tour of inspection, that occupied four hours, they were invited to rest in the house of one of the Professors, where they were refreshed with a dainty lunch, after which they returned to the village.

And the evening was spent socially in Mrs. Wheatfield's drawing-room.

CHAPTER XCII.

A SURPRISE.

In the course of that evening they were surprised by a visit.

It was from Mr. Craven Kyte, who came to call on Miss Cavendish.

He was invited into the drawing-room, and introduced to the whole party.

Mr. Kyte was in the deepest state of despondency.

He told Miss Emma that, a few days previous, he had received a letter from Mrs. Grey, saying that she was about to leave Charlottesville for a little while, in order to give up her rooms to Miss Cavendish and her party; and that she did not know exactly where she should go, but that she would write and tell him as soon as she should get settled.

"And since that, Miss Emma, I have not heard one word from her, nor do I know where she is, or how she is, or how to find out," concluded Mr. Kyte, in the most dejected tone.

"How long has it been, Mr. Kyte?" inquired Miss Cavendish.

"FIVE DAYS," answered the young man, as solemnly as if he had said five years.

"That is but a short time. I do not think you have cause to be anxious yet a while," said Emma, with a smile.

"But you haven't heard from her yourself even, have you, Miss Emma?" he anxiously inquired.

"Certainly not, else I should have told you at once," replied Miss Cavendish.

"For mercy's sake, you never came all the way from Wendover to Charlottesville to ask that question, did you, Mr. Kyte?" inquired irrepressible Electra, elevating her eyebrows.

The lover, who had so unconsciously betrayed himself, blushed violently, and stammered forth:

"No—not entirely. The fact is, for more than a year past I have been watching and waiting for an opportunity to change my business from Wendover to Charlottesville. And I came up partly about that also. But as a—a friend of Mrs. Grey, I do feel anxious about her mysterious absence and silence."

"I assure you, Mr. Kyte, that Mrs. Grey is quite capable of taking excellent care of herself," added plain-spoken Laura Lytton.

"Come, Mr. Kyte, cheer up! We are going on a pilgrimage to Monticello to-morrow, and you must join our party," said Miss Cavendish kindly.

But Mr. Kyte excused himself, saying that he could not leave his business long, and must start for Wendover the next morning.

And soon after this he took leave.

The next day was devoted by our party to a pious pilgrimage to the shrine of classic Monticello, once the seat, now the monument of Thomas Jefferson.

The whole party, young and old, gentlemen and ladies, went.

The Bishop's widow forgot her housekeeping cares, and took a holiday for that day.

And even Mrs. Fanning, who did not care to see the great University, could not miss the opportunity of a pilgrimage to that Mecca.

The party was a large one, consisting of five ladies and four gentlemen.

And so it required two capacious carriages and two saddle horses to convey them.

They formed quite a little procession in leaving the village.

In the first carriage rode Mrs. Fanning, Emma Cavendish, Electra, and Dr. Jones.

In the second carriage rode Mrs. Wheatfield, Laura Lytton and Mr. Lyle.

Alden Lytton and Victor Hartman rode on horseback, and brought up the rear.

Their way lay through the most sublime and beautiful mountain and valley scenery.

Monticello is built upon a mountain, some three miles south of the village.

Perhaps there is no private dwelling in the whole country occupying a more elevated site, or commanding a more magnificent panorama of landscape, than Monticello.

It is a fine country house of great architectural beauty and strength, built upon a lofty and slightly inclined plain, formed by grading the top of the mountain.

It commands a stupendous prospect, bounded only by the spherical form of the earth. And standing there, with the earth beneath and the heavens all around, one fully realizes that we live upon a great planet rolling in its orbit through immense space.

Our party spent a long summer's day up there in the sunshine, and then, after eating the luncheon they had brought with them, they set out on their return to the village, where they arrived in time for one of Mrs. Wheatfield's delicious early teas.

The remaining days of the week were passed in walking, riding, or driving to the most interesting points of the neighborhood.

On Saturday morning they took leave of the Bishop's widow, and set out for Richmond, *en route* for Wendover and Blue Cliffs.

They reached the city late on the same night, and took up their old quarters at the Henrico House.

They staid over the Sabbath, and went to hear Mr. Lyle preach, morning and evening, to his old congregation.

On Monday morning the whole party resumed their journey, and arrived at Wendover early in the afternoon of the same day.

There the party were destined to divide.

There were carriages from Blue Cliffs waiting by appointment at the railway station, to meet Miss Cavendish and her friends.

And there was the hack from the Reindeer Hotel, for the accommodation of any other travellers who might require it.

Mrs. Fanning, Emma Cavendish, Laura Lytton and Electra, attended by Dr. Jones and Alden Lytton, entered their carriages to go to Blue Cliff Hall.

Mr. Lyle and Victor Hartman took leave of them at their carriage doors, saw the horses start, and then set out to walk together to the bachelor home of Mr. Lyle, where Hartman was to be a guest.

CHAPTER XCIII.

AT THE PARSONAGE.

Mr. Lyle lived in a pretty white cottage, covered nearly to the roof with fragrant creeping vines, and standing in the midst of a beautiful flower-garden.

Here he lived his bachelor life, quite alone but for the occasional sight of the old negro couple that were waiting on him—Aunt Nancy, who did all his house work, and Uncle Ned who worked in the garden.

He found the faithful old couple prepared to receive him and his guest.

A tempting repast, combining the attractions of dinner and tea, was ready to be placed upon the table just as soon as the gentlemen should have made their toilets after their long journey.

Mr. Lyle led his guest into a fresh, pretty room, with white muslin curtains at the vine-clad windows and a white dimity spread on the bed, and white flower enamelled cottage furniture completing the appointments.

"This is a room for a pretty girl, rather than for a grim miner," said Victor Hartman, looking admiringly around the little apartment.

"I call it the 'Chamber of Peace,' and that is why I put you in it," said Mr. Lyle.

After they had washed and dressed they went down together to the cozy little dining-room, where they did such justice to the tea dinner as made Aunt Nancy's heart crow for joy.

And when that was over, they went into the snug little parlor and sat down to talk over their plans.

It was then that Mr. Lyle informed Victor Hartman that he was doing all the work of the parish during Dr. Goodwin's hopeless indisposition, and that he had been doing it for the last twelve months.

"You will succeed him here as Rector, I presume," said Victor.

"I presume so; but I do not like to speak of that," gravely replied Mr. Lyle.

"No, of course you do not. And I really beg your pardon. I should not have spoken myself, only in my girl's interests. You see, I felt a little curious and anxious to know where her future life would be likely to be passed, and I thought it would be a much happier life if passed here, near her dear friend Miss Cavendish, that's all," explained Victor.

"You seem to consider that quite a settled matter," replied Mr. Lyle, a little incoherently, and blushing like a maiden.

"Yes, of course I consider it all quite settled. You, in your earnestness, cannot conceal your liking for my girl, and she, in her innocent frankness, does not even try to conceal hers for you. And I heartily approve the match, and am ready to dower the bride," said Victor.

"But I have not ventured to speak to her yet," stammered Mr. Lyle.

"Then you may do so just as soon as you please," answered Victor.

"And now about Alden," said Mr. Lyle, by way of changing the conversation.

"Yes, now about Alden. He does not suspect that I am his banker, I hope."

"No, indeed. I paid him over the munificent sum you intrusted to me for him. He feels—well, I may say, painfully grateful, and is confident that he must sometime repay you, with interest and compound interest."

"Yes, my boy will certainly repay me, but not in the way he thinks," observed Victor gravely.

"After a week's visiting with his sister at Blue Cliffs, he will go up to Richmond and select a site for his office, and purchase his law library, though I think he will have to go to Philadelphia to do that."

"Yes, I suppose he will," admitted Hartman.

"What are your own plans about yourself, Victor, if I may be allowed to ask?" inquired the minister.

"Well, I haven't any. I came on here to see my boy and girl, and settle them in life as well as I can. I shall stay till I do that, any way. After that, I don't know what I shall do. I do not care about going back to California. My business there is in the hands of a capable and trustworthy agent. And somehow I like the old mother State; and now that you lead me to think about it, perhaps I shall spend the rest of my life here; but, as I said before, I don't know."

"By the way, dear Victor, you spoke to me with much simple frankness of my most private personal affairs. May I take the same liberty with yours?" inquired Mr. Lyle very seriously.

"Why, of course you may, if you call it a liberty, which I don't, you know," answered Victor, with a smile.

"Then, my dear Hartman, how about Miss Electra? I was not so absorbed in my own interests as not to have an eye to yours."

"Ah, Miss Electra! Well, parson, she *was* my little old acquaintance of Rat Alley, when I flourished in that fragrant neighborhood as 'Galley Vick.'"

"No!" exclaimed Mr. Lyle, opening his eyes wide with astonishment.

"Yes," quietly answered Victor Hartman. "And it is a wonder that you, who know the family so well, do not know this episode in its history."

"How was I to know, my friend, when no one ever told me? I suppose that few or none *but* the family know anything about it."

"I suppose you are right," said Victor. "Well, you see, she recognized me, as surely as I did her, at first sight. We had an explanation as we walked out to the University that day."

"But how came the granddaughter of Dr. Beresford Jones ever to have had such a miserable childhood?"

"Well, you see, there was a disobedient daughter, a runaway marriage, a profligate husband, and the consequences—poverty, destitution, early death, and an orphan child left among beggars and thieves! Her grandfather found her at last, and took her under his guardianship. That is the whole story in brief."

"Well, well, well," mused Mr. Lyle, with his head on his breast; then raising it, he went back to the previous question:

"But what about Miss Electra?"

"I have just told you about her," replied Victor.

"O yes, I know. You have told me something about her, but you haven't told me all. Take me into your confidence, Victor."

"What do you mean?" inquired Hartman, in some embarrassment.

"Why, that you and your little old acquaintance seem to be very fond of each other."

Victor laughed in an embarrassed manner, and then said:

"Do you know that when we were in Rat Alley, and she was a tiny child and I was a lad, there was a promise of marriage between us?"

"That was funny too. Well, what about it?"

"Nothing. Only, if I dared, I would some day remind her of it."

"Do, Victor. Believe me she will not affect to have forgotten it," said Mr. Lyle earnestly.

"Ah! but when I think of all I have passed through, I dare not ask a beautiful and happy girl to unite her bright life with my blackened one. I dare not," said Hartman very sadly.

"Nonsense, Victor! You are morbid on that subject. Yours is a nobly redeemed life," said Mr. Lyle solemnly.

"But—my past?" sighed Victor.

"*She* had a dark past too, poor child. But no more of that. In both your cases,

"'Let the dead past bury its dead!
Live—live in the living present,
Heart within and God o'erhead!'

And now it is time to retire, dear Victor. We keep early hours here," said Mr. Lyle, as he reached down the Bible from its shelf, preparatory to commencing evening service.

Then they read the Word together, and offered up their prayers and thanksgivings together, and retired, strengthened.

This week, to which Alden Lytton's holiday visit to Blue Cliffs was limited, was passed by the young people in a succession of innocent entertainments.

First there was a garden party and dance at Blue Cliff Hall, at which all the young friends and acquaintances of Miss Cavendish assisted, which the Rev. Dr. Jones and the Rev. Mr. Lyle endorsed by their presence, and in which even Victor Hartman forgot for the time being, his own dark antecedents.

Next Mr. Lyle himself opened his bachelor heart and bachelor home to the young folks by giving them a tea party, which delighted the hearts of Aunt Nancy and Uncle Ned, who both declared that this looked something *like* life.

But the third and greatest event of the week took place on Friday evening, when Dr. Beresford Jones gave a great house-warming party, on the occasion of his carrying home his granddaughter and sole heiress, Electra Coroni.

Not only all our own young friends, including the reverend clergy and the Californian miner, but all the neighborhood and all the county were there.

And they kept up the festivities all day, and well into the night.

Emma Cavendish and Laura Lytton remained with Electra for a few days only, for Alden Lytton was to leave the neighborhood for Richmond, on the Monday morning following the party at Beresford Manors.

And during all this time no word was heard of Mary Grey.

That baleful woman had heard all that had passed at Charlottesville and at Wendover, and her vain and jealous spirit was filled with such mortification and rage that she was now hiding herself and deeply plotting the ruin of those who had been her best friends and benefactors.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

A TEAR.

BY HATTIE KYLE.

Paul Pruden was a bachelor, thirty-five years of age, if he was a day, and with a bald spot on his head, which made him appear much older than he really was; and Nelly Lyndon was a sweet little creature still in her teens; but Cupid had willed it that Paul should overlook all the elderly maidens and youthful widows of his acquaintance and fix his affections on this one little Nelly.

They were near neighbors, and spent many evenings together. Indeed, the acquaintance was growing antiquated, for it had commenced when the young lady was a mere school-girl, and Paul had escorted her from school under his umbrella on rainy days, pretending to come upon her accidentally, while, in fact, he had dodged school children and neighbors and exposed himself to the elements for no other purpose.

There were people who thought Paul Pruden a handsome man, who admired his good taste and common-sense, and considered him a very important feature in the matrimonial market; but Paul was afflicted with an over-modest opinion of himself. That shiny bald spot in the midst of his curly pate vexed him greatly, and he vaguely felt himself to be a little old-fashioned, a little behind the times. Lively little Nelly was surely the last person to care for a dull old fellow like him, yet he grew fonder and fonder of her as the years went by, and more and more constant in his attentions.

One by one Nelly's lovers dropped away. If a new one entered the lists, an evening spent in company with Paul and the object of Paul's adoration was sufficient to quench the hopes of the new-comer and drive him forever from the field; yet this notable cavalier was blind to everything but Nelly's worth and his own deficiencies.

At last, however, an officious friend—one of those people who have small faith in the law of progression, but would fain put a shoulder to fortune's wheel—suggested to Paul that he should marry Nelly.

"Marry Nelly!" The thought almost took away his breath. But the good seed was sown. It took root. It grew like Jack's bean-stalk. By the next day it was a full-grown plant. Yes, he would marry Nelly if she would have him; but there was the rub.

After much self-torment and many meditations before his mirror, Paul decided that he would know his fate that very evening; so, dressed in his finest style, and armed with an exquisite bouquet, he betook himself to the mansion of his beloved.

Never before had Nelly looked so lovely. Her dark, rippling hair, adorned with a single pale rose, fell low over her white forehead.

Conversation did not flow with its wonted vivacity. There seemed to be great difficulty in getting beyond the weather. If it had been raining torrents, and they out in miles of quagmire, they couldn't have stuck there more ignominiously; but at last they floundered out, in a somewhat unexpected manner.

"I think of going to Europe," blurted out Paul.

He had not in the least intended to do or speak of such a thing a moment before, but it struck him as a good way of sounding Nelly's feelings, and he did most assuredly mean to go if she proved herself indifferent.

"Indeed," answered Nelly, carelessly. "And when do you intend to start, Mr. Pruden?"

"By the next steamer," quoth he, with rage in his heart. "I am lonesome here. There's not a creature cares whether I'm alive or dead, and I begin to want a little recreation."

Nelly bent down her head to bury her pretty little Grecian nose amid his floral offerings, and Paul thought—no, he must be mistaken—but he certainly fancied for a moment that a sparkling tear dropped upon her bosom.

What a freak imagination had played upon him! or it might have been a dewy tear from his own rosebuds.

"So much for an old fool's conceit!" he muttered to himself; for the next instant Nelly raised her smiling eyes to his with a jest.

Never had he known her so lively, now the first dullness of the evening was over. She told him what a gay time she should have that winter while he was on the Continent; how she was going to a ball only the next week with Captain Fitzjames, and did he think lavender became her—she was solicitous to know—for her dress was to be lavender and white lace. And then she confided to those most unsympathizing ears that Captain Fitzjames was the finest dancer she knew, and had lovely mustaches, and "such hair!" and "such splendid eyes!"

Paul groaned in spirit, and took his leave. O, Nelly, Nelly! How he longed to kiss her! Perhaps he might when he came to say good-bye. But no. When her praises of that unknown captain recurred to his memory, he thought it might be better to leave a note of farewell.

The next day he engaged his passage to Europe, and overturned and emptied every trunk, drawer and box he possessed, to discover what he needed for his trip. In the midst of the confusion came a tap at his door, and he was descended upon by his nephew Ambrose, a youth of sixteen, who thought Uncle Paul a good, generous fellow, but somewhat of an "old fogy," and amenable to all kinds of advice.

"What's the row, Uncle Paul?" was his first inquiry. "Going to Europe? That's jolly!"

And thereupon proceeded an examination of the bachelor's belongings by this youthful scion of the house of Pruden. The wardrobe was by no means despicable. The young fellow was much impressed by its solid character, and consulted gravely with his uncle as to what additions might be requisite, offering innumerable suggestions the while.

"O my, what a lot! What will you do with them?" he cried out presently.

The exclamation brought Paul from the interior of a huge trunk, among whose contents he was delving, into the daylight, to find young Ambrose raking industriously among the smaller paraphernalia of his toilet, producing therefrom kid gloves of various hues, which he fished forth one by one, and held to view admiringly.

"Oh, they are soiled," said Paul sadly, and sighed, not for the gloves, but for the happy evenings they had seen in Nelly's company.

"Why, that's no matter," cried Ambrose, in an encouraging tone. "They an't hardly soiled a bit, and you can have them cleaned as good as new. Mother always does. And there's a dyer's around the corner, a first-rate place."

"Well, I'll try the experiment," said Paul mildly; "but I expect they will come back all streaks and spots, and I don't believe they'll be done in two weeks."

Finally their arduous labors were completed, and Ambrose went off whistling, with a handsome present in his pocket, the usual result of a visit to his Uncle Paul; and the lonely bachelor spent the rest of his day in melancholy meditations, with his garments still strewn around him.

Then, as trifles will intrude on the most solemn occasions, a thought of his nephew's advice crossed his mind, and he separated from the mountain of apparel before him, some three dozen pairs of kid gloves of the finest Parisian make, whose tips had been blest by the touch of Nelly's tiny fingers, and laid them aside in a parcel, proceeding thereafter to adjust and dispose of the miscellaneous heap before him, and then retired to rest with a heavy heart.

The next morning the parcel caught his eye. He rang for the small boy who usually waited upon him, but the boy was not at hand.

"It's truly ridiculous," he said to himself, "to bother about them. But I am always being accused of extravagance. I'll see if I can't be economical for once, and I'll go myself. They'll be more apt to let me have them in time."

So off he sallied, parcel in hand, hesitating and turning back more than once. He said afterward that Fate led him on. The dyer's shop was soon reached, a dingy looking establishment, much darkened by the garments draped in its window; but through the gloom, while his hand was still on the door, Paul discerned a figure he knew full well leaning across the counter, in earnest conversation with the only attendant of the place. As he stood there, waiting till she should turn and recognize him, his eye fell upon the objects of her animated discussion. There was the pretty blue silk she had worn at least three winters before, and a dozen other articles she had cast off long ago.

Dear little Nelly! She must be very saving, or very much in want of funds, to resort to such thrift. How he would have liked to lavish dainty things upon her!

"Can you take out this spot?" she said, at length, lifting from the heap a silken scarf, the same pink and white one he had admired only the evening before.

"If you can tell me, Miss, what it was that made the spot, I think we may," said the woman behind the counter. "If it is ice-cream, it is one way we take it out; if it is something else, another way; but the color is so delicate we must know at first."

"It's a tear," cried Nelly, with a little musical laugh.

"Ah!" said the other sympathetically. "Some sad parting. Well, we will see."

And then the girl turned to catch a glimpse of the stranger who had heard her odd confession, and the color flew to her pale face, and she hurried out with a frigid bow, only waiting impatiently for the ticket for her goods; while Paul, much to the astonishment of the woman, who still held that precious tear-stained silk in her hand, threw his three dozen gloves upon the counter without a word, and followed after.

What passed between them in that morning walk, none but the two parties most concerned ever knew; but it must be recorded that the pink and white tie proved a miserable failure of the scouring art, and the gloves were not ready in time for the projected voyage; yet neither of their owners were greatly grieved, for the pink ribbon was exchanged for that true lover's knot which Hymen ties, and the gloves in which they were most interested were of pristine purity.

Paul still regards his little Nelly with a lover's eyes, and growing happier and younger as time goes by, often looks with a smile at the faded ribbon of our story, and vows that he owes all the bliss of his wedded years to a tear.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1872.

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER
FOR THE NEW YEAR, 1872.

THE GREAT FAMILY PAPER.

The Best Without Regard to Cost.

We continue to conduct the LEDGER on our established rule, which is to procure and publish, without regard to money or price, the best original matter that can be had in the world.

All the old writers—their names are familiar to the public, and it is needless to repeat them here—will continue to write for the *Ledger;* and we have engaged exclusively for the *Ledger* the very best and most popular of the rising authors. *Good as the Ledger has heretofore been, the volume for* 1872 *will be better than any one ever yet published.*

The BEST that a long experience enables us to select, and that money, without stint, can buy, will be constantly spread before the readers of the *Ledger.*

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ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

Do People Like to be Swindled?

We are sometimes inclined to think that people really do like to be swindled. Day after day we receive letters from persons who have sent money in response to advertisements of gift enterprises, inquiring of us how they can get their money back. They cannot get their money back at all; or, if they could, it would cost more than the amount.

While people cannot recover their money, however, thus invested, they can avoid sending it. They have been warned, over and over again, in the *Ledger* and in other papers, against being entrapped by such shallow pretences. But a slight change in the form of these swindlers' schemes always catches new gulls.

An auctioneer in this city used to have very extensive and frequent sales of what he advertised as old furniture. At that time, it was the fashion to prefer ancient furniture to modern. His was, in reality, all new; but manufactured so as to resemble the old. We took occasion to remonstrate with him against the deception and dishonesty of his mode of doing business.

"Ah, my dear sir," he replied, "I have found out by experience that the people of New York *like to be humbugged.*"

We have about come to the conclusion that the people of other places are very much as this auctioneer considered the people of New York. They do not seem disposed to see through the very thinnest disguise, but insist on paying away their money for chances which they ought to perceive are, on the face of them, too extravagant to be true. Savings Banks have not proved as safe as they should be, of late; but gift enterprises are a certain loss.

* * *

Deducting Shirts from a Minister's Salary.

We used to hear a story of an old lady who, in recounting what she had done for her clergyman, said, "And then, also, I made him two shirts for *nothing,* and that 's *something.*"

According to the Rev. Dr. PRIME—writing in the New York *Observer*—ladies, now-a-days, who make shirts for clergymen—even young clergymen—do not always make them for nothing. At this the venerable Doctor waxeth very wroth. He pronounces it a "wrong and outrage," and says it makes "one blush for the race of mankind"—meaning, evidently, the race of womankind. The Doctor appears to blush more easily than the ladies. His story is as follows:

"It was not in the far East, nor the far West, nor the far South, but here within two hours of New York city, in one of the richest counties, and most distinguished for its prosperity and privileges. The pastor was a young man, and the ladies of his congregation, without consulting him, procured the material and made him a set of shirts, half a dozen, and presented them to him in token of their good feeling. He accepted them, of course. When his salary was paid at the end of the quarter he was charged, 'Six shirts, at $2.50=$15,' and the fifteen dollars was deducted from his salary!"

* * *

A Colt Bound to Draw Upward.

JERSEYVILLE, Ill., March 14, 1872.

MR. BONNER—I wrote you some time ago about the Iowa two-legged colt, but I have not heard from you yet. I would like to hear from you, and hear what you think the colt is worth. I know that you are bothered considerably with correspondence, but I hope that you will answer me this time. The colt is two years old this spring, and is of good size, bay color, and as healthy a colt as I ever saw. She has her hind legs, but has not got any sign of fore ones. She has good use of herself for one in her fix. Direct to

GEORGE METCALF, Jerseyville,
Jersey Co., Ill.

We have no use for such a colt; but as one of our "religious" cotemporaries recently doubted whether any man had ever been drawn upward by a horse, we take the liberty of suggesting that you call the attention of this fastidious editor to the two-legged colt. Having only its hind legs, it is evident that every time it moves it will have to raise itself, and in so doing it might elevate its owner.

* * *

Appropriating Things without Credit.

In a recent number of the *Canadian Home Journal,* published at St. Thomas, Ontario, we find not only an installment of Mr. LEWIS's story, "*Mark Heber's Luck,*" but five editorial articles—all copied from the *Ledger,* without a word of credit. This makes the *Canadian Home Journal* a pretty good paper; but, could not the publishers still improve it by copying the *Ledger* entire?

The American Trotting Congress—A Different Association Wanted.

We think there is a defect in the very principle on which the Association for Promoting Trotting, of which our esteemed friend, the Hon. AMASA SPRAGUE, is President, which must prove fatal to the object it has in view. This defect consists in the adoption of the old gambler's rule, not to give a horse a record for time unless a bet is depending upon the performance.

What necessary or natural connection with time has betting? Is not a horse's speed just the same whether a bet be decided by it or not?

This rule of determining speed is wholly inconsistent with the spirit of the times in which we live. It is destructive of a man's character now to be known as a gambler. We believe Mr. SPRAGUE employs nearly ten thousand persons; yet we presume to say that he would not trust any one in a confidential, pecuniary relation, who was addicted to playing at faro, betting heavily on races, or any other species of gambling. He is anxious to promote the speed of horses. Will he not do something to disconnect the necessity of gambling from the obtaining of a record for a horse's speed.

Just as we were about commencing this article, our attention was attracted to a paragraph in a morning paper, giving an account of the horrible death of a man whose body had been taken to the Morgue. He was found bleeding in the street, and it was ascertained by papers found on his person that he had been reduced to extreme want. A few years ago, he was a broker in excellent standing. He had lost fifty thousand dollars by gambling within the last two years. Should a national association encourage this ruinous habit?

Recently a well-known clergyman, residing at a considerable distance from this city, called upon us to discuss this subject. He said that he had a farm in the country where he was raising horses. In doing this, as a matter of course, he had an eye to speed. He would be a fool not to have; for who wants to do an unprofitable business when he can just as well make the same business profitable? He remarked that he desired the speed of his horses established and known, and he did not see why a method of accomplishing this could not be adopted, to which betting should not be a necessity.

Our previous expressions of views similar to those which we present here have met with such a hearty response, that we are quite convinced that nearly everybody interested in the subject is with us, and we are satisfied that unless the American Association conform their rules to the prevailing ideas in this respect, they will be eclipsed by a new society, founded on a more acceptable and popular theory.

* * *

Too Many of Them Already.

An increase of the members of the Federal Cabinet is proposed, by the addition of a Secretary of Agriculture and a Secretary of Commerce.

This is sheer, downright nonsense, as our Government carries on neither agriculture nor commerce, and ought not to engage in either farming or dry goods selling.

There are some things which the Government must attend to, and which private enterprise cannot cope with. For instance, it has official dealings with other governments, involving matters of grave importance, and therefore requires a Secretary of State. It has to defend the country against foreign and domestic foes, and must, therefore, have an army and navy; and hence a Secretary of War and a Secretary of the Navy are indispensable. It has to raise money to pay its way, and to disburse the same, and so a Secretary of the Treasury is required. Questions of law, of vast importance, arise, and so it needs its Attorney-General. It carries on the entire postal business of the country, and therefore it must have a Postmaster-General. It has vast quantities of public lands to dispose of, and many tribes of Indians to manage, and these duties are properly devolved upon a Secretary of the Interior.

So, too, if the Government had some thousands of farms which it was working, it might be necessary to place them under a Secretary of Agriculture. And if it had merchant ships trading to all lands, and warehouses in our cities, it might be expedient to adorn the Cabinet with a Secretary of Commerce. But the government has neither farms nor merchant ships, and is not engaged in either agriculture or commerce, and therefore we want no departments foisted upon us to hamper those industries and interests.

Whatever comes legitimately within the scope of private enterprise can be done better under the stimulus of personal competition than it could be done by any government whatever. Take the supplying of the city of New York with food, for example. What government could possibly do it as well as it is done now, by every huckster and provision dealer's simply attending to his own business without any thought of the general welfare?

Imagine a Secretary of Literature meddling with and muddling the publication of books, newspapers and periodicals!

We cannot stand too much of this sort of thing. We have too many government officials and too much government intermeddling already. If the increase of these public functionaries is allowed to go on unnecessarily, we shall by and by have a Secretary of Children's Toys, who will attempt to regulate the traffic in rattles, dolls, rocking-horses, swings and crying babies.

* * *

A Bride Dies of Hydrophobia on her Wedding-Day.

[From the Pittston Gazette.]

About eleven weeks ago a young lady named Cox, daughter of Miles Cox of Stodardsville, went into the yard to kill some chickens. The dog followed her, and picking up one of the chickens, ran off with it. She chased him with a stick to recover it, and coming up to him, he turned upon her and bit her in the arm, lacerating it fearfully. Her mother and brother, coming to the rescue, were also badly bitten by the infuriated beast. The wounds healed, however, and nothing more was thought of the matter. The young woman was engaged to be married to a young man living at Goldsboro', named Alfred Kerrick, and the wedding was appointed to come off at that place two weeks ago.

On the wedding morning, as she was about to perform her ablutions, the sight of the water sent a shiver through her whole system and frightened her, and at the breakfast table the coffee had such an effect upon her that she spilled it over the table. She then complained of feeling unwell, and her friends advised her to remain at home, but she said that she did not want to disappoint Al., and accompanied by a sister, proceeded to Goldsboro', where the wedding ceremony was performed. Immediately after this she was seized with spasms, bearing all the indications of hydrophobia. In one of her lucid intervals she warned them that she would bite them if they did not keep away from her. "But," she said to her husband, "Al., you need not be afraid, I won't bite you." In one of her paroxysms she bit a lady who was endeavoring to soothe her. Soon after assuring her husband that she would not bite him, she was seized with convulsions, and laying back in his arms expired. We have seldom been called upon to record so sad a case as this. For one moment a happy bride, and the next moment the victim of a horrid death. The other members of the family who were bitten by the dog have not, as yet, displayed any symptoms of the disease, but they live in hourly dread.

IDEAS OF HEAVEN.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

FEBRUARY, 26, 1872.

DEAR MR. BEECHER: Please answer through the *Ledger* this question: What relation will our dear friends in this world be to us, if we all meet in Heaven? Shall we know and have preference for each other's society there? I hope so, and if I could only know it, I think I should be a better man. Please answer soon as convenient. I shall anxiously watch the *Ledger* for an answer. C. A. C.

There are a hundred questions which spring up in our daily life, for which we shall in vain seek for a specific answer in the Bible. This is eminently true of the details of the future life. As the domestic affections here become stronger and richer by Christian culture, so when death removes one from the household, besides the outburst of natural sorrow, which has probably been the same or alike in all ages, there will be many inquiries springing from the speculations which have occupied so much the attention of Christian people.

If such or like questions were put to Jesus, the fact is not recorded. There is one memorable instance in which his attention was called to the condition of the after-state, as looked at from the habits and arrangements of this world, namely, when his adversaries brought forward the case of the woman who had, in accordance with the Hebrew customs, married in succession seven brothers; and who naturally enough, it was supposed, would be puzzled to know, in the other life, to whom she belonged. Jesus replied, that in heaven they neither marry, nor are given in marriage. In other words, those domestic arrangements by which the race on earth was continued and cared for, would, in another and different sphere, entirely cease.

But nowhere is it intimated that our knowledge of each other, or our superior affections, will cease. On the contrary, the fair implication of Christ's teachings, and of his apostles, is that conscious identity and the higher social relationships will continue and be heightened in the heavenly land. That the apostles expected to meet the heroic worthies of their own nation, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, David, and the prophets, no one can doubt who reads the epistle to the Hebrews.

It shocks every nobler sentiment of our nature to suppose that those ties for which we have sacrificed everything, and which have constituted the very strength of our best life, will be broken and disappear in the other life. If such a doctrine were believed, it would lower the temper of love, and weaken the morality of human life.

It is natural to suppose that in the other life those elements which are furthest removed from passions—our social and moral sentiments—will have more, and not less power; that love will not be disbranched and rendered unfruitful, but will spring up with new vigor, and with developments for which this world was not prepared. That parents and children will stand in different relations to each other is more than probable; but it will be a relation which will augment love, not diminish it. That friendships will change, there can hardly be a doubt; but it will be a change not toward decay and forgetfulness, but toward completeness in transcendent excellence. Not only shall we in all probability know each other, but it will be a knowledge which will reveal a thousand times more in each other than on earth we could discern. Here we are in bud, there in full leaf and blossom; or here in blossom, and there in full fruit. To suppose that Heaven forgets all that earth knew, is to believe in substantial annihilation. A being who forgets all that preceded, and begins anew in the spirit land, can hardly be distinguished, to his own consciousness, from one who has just been created.

The particular things which bereaved lovers, desolate mothers or sundered friends think about the absent whom Heaven has swallowed up, may not be specifically true, but they will be in the spirit of truth, in the direction of truth, and vary from truth only in not being half so good, so rich, so beautiful as the reality.

The most admirable title applied to God may well throw its light upon the whole heavenly state: "HE *that doeth exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.*"

* * *

ONE SPECIES OF INSANITY.

Did you ever see a woman who was possessed by the house-cleaning fiend? Not periodically, but at all times. Who would go about drawing her finger over every lounge and table and chair, speering into cracks and crannies for crooked pins and lint; holding tumblers up to the light for finger marks; in short, so utterly absorbed in the pursuit of dirt that every other pursuit was as nothing in comparison.

Now, being New England born, I know what neatness is, and value it as only a New Englander can; but when it takes such shape as this, and robs life of all its charms, I turn my back upon it with righteous disgust. Who thanks these zealous furies for their self-imposed labors? Certainly not their husbands, who flee into remote corners from dust-pans and dust-brushes, and weary of the recitals of their prowess day by day. Certainly not their children, who have no place to stow away their little sacred property in the shape of bright bits of silk or paper, or broken cups, which are dear and precious to them, and should always be held in respect within proper innocent limits.

Oh, ye careful and troubled Marthas of the household, stop and take breath. Place a flower on the mantel, that you, and your household, may perhaps have some in their lives. While you stop to rest, read. So shall the cobwebs be brushed from your neglected brain, and you shall learn that something else besides cleanliness is necessary to make home *really* home, for those dependent on your care.

Throw your broom out of doors; take your children by the hand, and let the fresh wind touch your wrinkled forehead. If your house is wound up to such an immaculate pitch of cleanliness, it can run on a few hours without your care. Laugh and talk with them, or better still, listen to their foolish-wise talk. Bring home a bit of gingerbread for each of them, and play some simple game with them. Put on the freshest dress you have, and ask your husband, when he comes in, if he recognizes his wife.

"I wish my mother looked as pretty as you," said a little girl, one day, to a neighbor.

"But your mamma is much prettier than I," replied the neighbor. The truth was that the child's mother always was in a wrapper, unless company was expected. The rest of the time she was under the dominion of the house-cleaning fiend, and the children fled from such a joyless utilitarian home, where no flower of beauty could ever get time to take root and blossom.

There is little need to misinterpret my meaning. Many a ruined life has come of a joyless home. Your children take to the sunlight as naturally as do the flowers. Shut it out of your houses, and they will go abroad in search of it, you may be sure of that. Isn't this worth thinking about, O ye mothers? careful and troubled about many things, and yet so blind to your first and greatest duty!

FANNY FERN.

* * *

A Barbarous View about Hanging People.

The *London Court Circular*—an aristocratic English paper—says:

"Always put to death the murderers, *whether mad or sane.* Spare none. This being done, you escape the frightful risks which must occur if they remain alive."

GOOSE FEATHERS.

(FOR RESTING HOURS.)

BY DR. JOHN HALL, NEW YORK.

Sir John Falstaff declared of himself, "I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men," and doubtless the great, gross gourmand did suggest some drollery. On the same principle, if Dr. Brewer and other authors may be relied on, the goose, while so suggestive of silliness and stupidity in look, walk, voice, manners, and general bearing, as to be the synonym for an awkward, clumsy fellow, seems to have furnished some of the most pungent and memorable of those sayings in which the wit of one condenses the wisdom of many. When, for example, a good customer moderately imposed upon for years, is driven away by one enormous and detected imposition, what is more expressive than "he killed the goose to get the eggs?" One does not need to add the Greek fable about the peasant whose goose laid golden eggs, and who killed her for the whole stock. The naked proverb is plain, pithy and memorable.

When one comes across an old, crusty, calculating collector of dollars, an over-grown set of interest tables, a walking money-bag, and seeks in vain to appeal to generosity or charity; when the habits of early and necessary economy have been continued and confirmed when the necessity no longer exists, what is more descriptive than the saying, "The older the goose the harder to pluck?" It is not necessary to suppose a sly hit in the word "goose" at the blockheadism of the man who, the longer he lives, loves his money the more. It is enough that his money—the "fine feathers which make him a fine fowl" in his own esteem—stick with added tenacity with added years. Young men had better learn to give out when still young, provided only it be for good purposes.

When a man robs on a large scale, and is generous out of the proceeds—when he "directs" a railway, and appropriates by the million, attaching to himself at the same time by the outlay of thousands, the good, bad and indifferent—when the church stands over his grave, and vouches for his goodness, how apt is the illustration, "He steals the goose and gives the giblets in alms." The Spaniards have not beaten this picture of cheap charity in their proverb: "He steals the pig and gives away the pettitoes for God's sake." The movement here is heavy—the goose flies. How many benefactors of the race, over whom those "widows' and orphans' tears" are to distil perennially, might place a goose—partially carved—upon their coat of arms! It is not from the supposed silliness of the bird that the gooseberry in a cooked state is called "gooseberry fool." That berry is no relation of the goose at all; it is gorse-berry, or rough berry; and the "fool" is a corruption of the French *foulé,* or mashed. You may rely on Dr. Brewer and on Webster for that. And if any reader should be told, "What a goose you are,"—ladies have a trick of saying it—let him comfort himself with the reflection that the description is venerable from its antiquity, the symbol of an empty-headed simpleton in the Egyptian hieroglyphics being a goose.

Can anything better represent the demand of fairness and impartiality than the proverb, "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander?" If persons are to be "roasted" and served up for the enjoyment of others, the man is as justly liable as the woman. "This is an Englishman's proverb," says Kelly; we add about Michaelmas, though we do not absolutely pin our faith to the statement that St. Martin killed and ate a goose which annoyed him. Besides, why should that connect the goose and Michaelmas?

It is doubtful if Americans understand the phrase "to do gooseberry;" that is, to be the third party, for the sake of propriety, for a pair of lovers. We presume the gooseberry selected would be of the green variety. Indeed Goldsmith uses the word gooseberry to describe a silly person, or goose-cap.

Probably no threat has more thoroughly descended into the region of vulgar slang than this: "I'll cook your goose for you." Like many other things—now low indeed—it has, however, a right royal history, if Dr. Brewer is correct. King Eric of Sweden coming with a few troops to a certain town, the inhabitants, in contemptuous defiance, hung out a goose for him to attack. But Eric meant business; discovering which, the citizens sent heralds to ask what he wanted. "To cook your goose for you," was his facetious reply, of which, let us hope, the citizens enjoyed the humor.

For a goose may contribute to good-humor. The late Dr. Cooke of Belfast was engaged in a famous Irish discussion, in which an American gentleman volunteered alliance with his opponents, and received so forcible and decisive a thrust from the Doctor, that a friend of his attempted to hiss the triumphant orator. The cry was raised, "Put out the man who hissed!" and some ill-temper showed itself, but was promptly allayed by the ready wit of the assailed speaker: "I am not certain," said he, "that it was a hiss at all; nor is there any special proof that it was intended for me, or my conscience-searching statement. But if it were a hiss intended for me, I beg to assure the meeting that I am quite prepared for such politeness. I have been hissed a hundred times by—a goose." Nor was the allusion far-fetched and unnatural, for "to get the goose," is the theatrical formula for being hissed on the stage.

Some time ago the citizens of Gotham were edified by the catalogue of wedding gifts to a princess of one of its great ruling families whose wealth was considerable already. Human nature seems to have been long addicted to such ways, not in America only. "He gives an egg to get a chicken," say the frugal Dutch. "To one who has a pie in the oven you may give a bit of your cake," say the French, or more curtly, "He that eats capon, gets capon." The Spanish way of it is rather heavy: "People don't give black-puddings to one who kills no pigs." But is anything more concise than "he that has a goose will get a goose?" This giving of gifts to the rich is not to be confounded with that English form of petty gambling to which Goldsmith alludes,

"The royal game of goose was there to view,"

and which was so called, because the figure of a goose was at intervals on the card, and when reached by the player's throw he received some advantages therefrom.

Can there be any better illustration of petty revenge and spite than is furnished by the English peasant, who cruelly murders the unoffending goslings, and replies to a remonstrance, "Whoi did goose-chick's fawther nibble oi'?" In a new edition of Mr. Tupper's *Proverbial Philosophy,* something might surely be made of the principle thus illustrated.

The force and propriety of the phrase "a wild-goose chase" must be obvious. The wild-goose, being migratory, may be easily looked for in places already forsaken. The creature is hard to get, and little worth when secured. We have known a man find a mare's nest—which, by the way, as a phrase, has a history of its own—in a way the very reverse of the wild-goose chase. Seeing a strange bird in the rivulet that ran through the farm, a decent man brought out his gun and fired. The bird, evidently wounded, did not fly away. Hastening to his house, he got another charge, cautiously approached, and fired again, this time completing the slaughter. He bore his trophy home in triumph as a wild-goose, to learn from the more observant females of his family that he had shot the unsuspecting parent of his next neighbor's expected goslings, the creature having strayed away while the other parent was engaged in immediate domestic duties—a serious warning surely, to geese of another kind.

On the whole, with growing knowledge of the goose, our respect for the creature increases, not merely as the grower of the quills of poets and historians, or of livers for gourmands, in the shape of *patè de foie gras,* of so much importance in Strasburg's trade—and which we may presume rose as Strasburg fell—nor as furnishing the model and name of the tailor's goose, or the machinist's goose-neck; but as being, like many another simple creature, if not wise and clever, the help to the wisdom and cleverness of others. Of course a very small wit will enable any reader to say,

"A fellow-feeling makes one wondrous kind,"

but no misapplication of that maxim, which David Garrick got out of Burton, will prevent our recognition of merit—even in a goose.

Did not "geese save the capitol" in Rome? and if no like exploits are now performed, it must be, surely, not because the cackling has ceased around our modern capitols, but because the Gauls do not invade in the old way. We have no wish to turn the geese into swans, though many estimable people do it daily. We only wish to give geese their due, and disregarding Sir Toby Belch's advice in *Twelfth Night:*

"Let there be gall enough in thy ink; though thou write with a goose-pen, no matter;"

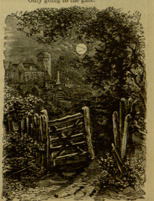
—for we use steel pens—we adopt kindly Charles Lamb's quotation, "The foolisher the fowl or fish, the finer the flesh thereof," and admit that some of the "kindliest patterns of our own species" have been "the darlings of absurdity," in other words—great geese.

* * *

ONLY GOING TO THE GATE.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Like a bell of blossom ringing
  Clear and childish, shrill and sweet,
Floating to the porch's shadow
  With the fainter fall of feet,
Comes this answer softly backward,
  Bidding tender watcher wait,
While the Baby Queen outruns her:
  "Only going to the gate."
Through the moonlight warm and scented,
  Love to beauty breathes his sigh,
Lingering, to leave reluctant,
  Loth to speak the low good-bye;
Then the same old echo answers,
  Waiting love of older date,
And the maiden whispers backward,
  "Only going to the gate."



Oh, these gates along our pathway,
  What they bar, outside and in!
With a vague outlook beyond them,
  Over ways we have not been!
How they stand before, behind us—
  Toll-gates some, with price to pay;
Spring gates some, that shut forever;
  Cloud gates some, that melt away!

Just across their slender weaving
  Troth-plight happy hands have crossed,
Yet its locks have rusted ruddy,
  Or its keys in night shade lost.
Over latches softly falling,
  Good-bye prayers have dropped like dew;
Little gate-ways softly shutting,
  Yet have cut a love in two.

So we pass them going upward
  On our journey, one by one,
To the distant shining wicket
  Where each trav'ler goes alone;
Where the friends who journey with us
  Strangely falter, stop and wait;
Father, mother, child, or lover,
  Only going to the gate.

* * *

Attempting to Behead a Man, and Getting Beheaded.

MR. EDWARD WARREN CLARK, formerly of New Brunswick, now a school-teacher in Japan, writes to the New York *Evangelist* as follows:

"We have recently had a little tragedy at our school. One of the guards, a gate-keeper, took it into his head to become robber instead of guard, in humble imitation of more distinguished men. So at midnight he quietly stole in upon the watchman, who slept in the room of the school, where the valuables were kept. The watchman was sleeping securely, with his head resting upon one of the Japanese pillow-blocks. The robber, with one blow of his sword, attempted to decapitate him, but only partially succeeded, for the man turned on his side and seized the blade of the sword; but his fingers were cut off in doing so; therefore he was soon dispatched, and the robber escaped with six hundred Rujos, leaving a Buddhist book behind him which fell from his clothes. He was tracked to the next province, however, and captured in three days. He was brought back, and has just been executed by having his head cut off."

* * *

How a Minister Lost a Thousand Dollars.

[From the Lehigh Valley Gazette.]

A wealthy Williamsport gentleman became so much attached to a clergyman of that city that he asked him to preach his funeral sermon, no matter where he might be. The pastor promised that no matter what the distance that separated them, or the difficulties that might be placed between, he would, when informed of the death of his old friend, drop all else, and hasten to the spot that was to be the resting-place of his mortal remains. The pastor afterward removed into that vicinity, and a short time ago received the sad announcement that his friend was dead. Instead of keeping his promise, he replied that he was unable to be present, as he could not close his church, etc. The funeral took place in due season, but the pastor was not there to perform the last sad rites over the body of his departed friend. The ceremonies, however, were performed by another, and afterward, when the will was opened, it appeared that the old man had been faithful in death as he was in life, and bequeathed a thousand dollars to his old friend, *provided* he preached his funeral sermon. His feelings can better be imagined than described, we suppose.

* * *

Princes Learning a Trade.

[From the Hartford (Conn.) Courant.]

The sons of rich parents in America are often urged to learn some trade, both as a good discipline and education, and as a possible means of earning an honest living in case of a reverse of fortune, which is likely to come to any one. A man who has a good trade is master of himself, and has acquired a self-dependence of character which will be exceedingly valuable to him in any situation in life. Besides this, he will know one thing practically and thoroughly, and the influence of such knowledge upon character cannot be overestimated. But learning a trade is not fashionable, and a boy would have to encounter a good deal of social opposition who attempted it in a republic. There is a different standard in Germany. None of the princes are brought up idly. Prince Henry, son of the Prince Imperial, "Our Fritz," who won such credit in the late war, has been apprenticed to a Berlin bookbinder. His father was a printer, and his grandfather, the Emperor, was a glazier. The latter seems to have imitated, in his recent campaign, the London glazier who went about breaking windows for the benefit of the trade.

* * *

A Boy Tried for Murder.

[From the Hudson (New York) Star.]

On Thursday of last week, a boy by the name of Tuttle, twelve years of age, and said to be not over bright, was tried at Monticello, on the charge of having decoyed a child, two years old, son of Robert Kelso, of Half Way Brook, Sullivan county, to the edge of a bridge, and then pushed him off into the water and drowned him. He was acquitted.

AT DAYBREAK.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

One little gray bird and a sunbeam
Rocked on a leafless spray;
The winds piped eerily up and down,
And it was the break o' day;
And out of my narrow window
I looked, with a hopeless sigh.
"Oh, wide is the world and desolate,
And the heavens are far and high!"

The gray bird twittered and chirped and sang,
Keeping her small heart warm,
While wild and shrill the wind over hill
Went whistling up the storm;
And ever the landscape darkened,
As the wan clouds skurried past,
Slipping the silver leash of the rain,
At the shout of the summoning blast.

The Morning hid her haggard face
Low under an ashen hood,
And the little gray bird, with a frightened cry,
Fled into the tossing wood;
But the sunbeam clung like a tender hand
That is loth to loose its hold,
When fate o'ershadows some well beloved,
And the summer is sere and old.

And clinging fast, in gloom and blast,
The glory grew and grew,
Till the gaunt tree flashed in a robe of gold,
And the Morn laughed out anew:
And a glad thought brightened the weary face
Behind the lattice pane—
From the sunbeam's lesson a doubting heart
Drew courage and hope again!

MARK HEBER'S LUCK;

OR,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

BLUE JACK DISAPPOINTED.

The horrible din made by the savages in their attack upon the small fort completely covered the commotion that was occurring in the home of the Hebers.

If any one had heard Gay's shriek, no one heeded it in the shock occasioned by the onslaught of the Indians.

The men were all upon the walls, mind and body absorbed in the task of defending the small settlement. The women and children, awakened by the warwhoops and fiend-like yells, cowered in their beds, scarcely daring to breathe.

So this fight within a fight in Mark's house, like a wheel within a wheel, went on without molestation, the larger tumult going on outside swallowing up all lesser sounds.

Mark Heber and the ruffian Pringle, standing in Gay's bright little kitchen, lit by the faint red glow of the dying embers, glared at each other a moment in silence.

"Treacherous hound!" cried Mark, drawing his revolver. "You are one of Blue Jack's men, then? Was it this you came for?"

He fired, and the ball grazed Pringle's cheek, plowing a path through his bristling beard.

The ruffian shrieked out a wild curse, and levelled his revolver.

As quick as a flash, Gay leaped toward him from behind, and threw up his arm.

He fired, and his shot flew upward, finding lodgment in the boards forming the ceiling.

Before Pringle could recover himself, Mark Heber sprang upon him like a cat, wound his long fingers about the fellow's thick neck, nearly strangling him.

A deadly struggle followed.

And outside, from the walls of the fort the rifle shots rang out, now thick and fast in a very rain of bullets, now slower and far between, as the red demons charged against the great gates, or crouching farther off in the darkness, fired their shots in the direction of the settlers.

The warwhoops and yells made the night hideous. A very Pandemonium seemed to reign. The thought that he was wanted to aid in defence of the fort, and that his absence from his post must seem unaccountable to his friends, gave to Mark a very fury of desperation.

Pringle was not less desperate, but his was the desperation of despair. He was larger and heavier than Mark, and was skilled in rough hand-to-hand fights. He threw out his arms, striking right and left; but Mark's steel-like fist rained a succession of swift, hammer-like blows in his face and eyes that nearly stunned him, and certainly half blinded him.

With the physical advantage and experience in fighting which Pringle possessed, it became easy at length to see how the fight would terminate. But before Mark could be overthrown, or before he had abated the fury of his attack, some one ran past the house swiftly, then turned and came back, entering Mark's kitchen.

The new-comer was Will Whitman. He had been sent home by his father for more ammunition, and in passing the home of the Hebers had caught a glimpse of the conflict raging within.

Young Whitman's entrance for an instant diverted Mark's attention. As quick as light Pringle flung off his assailant, and dashed out at the door, hurrying out into the pitchy gloom, nearly overturning Whitman as he went.

Mark's face was covered with blood; his hair was dishevelled; his clothes torn. He breathed pantingly, and wiped his wet face, and leaned against the wall, while Gay breathlessly told her story to Will Whitman.

In the midst of the narration the swivel gun belched forth its hoarse utterance of death.

"You must go, both of you, boys," cried Gay. "You are needed on the walls. I will take care of the house. I can defend myself now, and Pringle will not come back. For my sake, Mark, dear Mark, go!"

Will Whitman hurried away on his errand. But Mark would not go until he had made the pantry window secure with nails and shutter, and then he hurried out to his post on the walls.

Gay locked and barred her door, and kindled anew the fire on her hearth. The night was chilly, as even midsummer nights are in the West, and the heat of the burning wood and the dancing flame on floor and walls made her solitude less terrible. She knelt down close to the door and listened to the sounds outside with wildly beating heart and strained sense of hearing.

Mark, meanwhile, ran across the strip of prairie soil, climbed the ladder, and mounted the platform. In the darkness, which was now blackness itself, his disordered appearance passed unnoticed. Indeed his identity was not apparent to Mr. Whitman, who called out in a low voice, as Mark's light step approached:

"Is that you, Will?"

"No, sir," said Mark. "It's I—Heber. I've been home."

"Oh, it's Heber!" said Mr. Whitman, his tone showing some surprise. "I missed you, Mark, but I suppose you had business elsewhere. I say, Heber, I don't know what to make of this attack. It's not a regular one. There are but a dozen Indians, and they can't expect to make an impression on this stockade, much less to take us prisoners. There's something behind—some mystery."

"I see it all," cried Mark hurriedly. "I went home just now, and found the man Pringle in my house, in the act of robbing it. I had a fight with him. His flight and pursuit by the Sioux is all a sham. He's leagued with the Sioux and with Blue Jack. And, on my soul, I believe that Blue Jack is outside, and this attack is all a sham, under cover of which Pringle is to get away."

"Where is Pringle?"

"In the fort, loose."

"Take half a dozen men and find him," said Whitman. "The rest of us will keep guard."

Mark hastened to obey. He summoned six armed men, three from the western side of the stockade, and three from the northern, and provided with lanterns, and under Mark's leadership, a search was immediately organized.

The square, with its great piles of cotton-wood logs, the sheds, the houses even, were searched, but the ruffian was not to be found.

He had, in fact, made good his escape.

On rushing out from Heber's house, he had hurried back to the square, and picked up his saddle-bags and blanket, and moved swiftly and silently toward the little postern gate, or door, through which he had seen the women of the fort go forth to get water from the river.

There was a guard upon this side of the fort, consisting of three men, but none of them were near the door when Pringle approached it. He could hear their tramp upon the platform far above his head, at some distance upon either side of him.

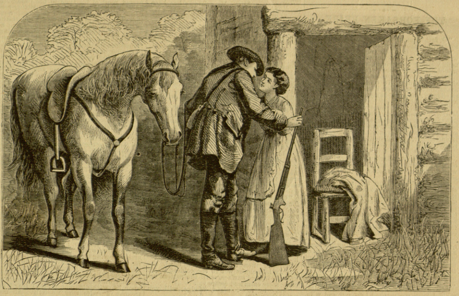
The small postern door was immediately in the rear of the Heber house, and there was no one to mark the movements of the treacherous stranger, as he essayed to escape from the fort that had sheltered him. He had learned before dusk the fastening of the door, and he now lifted the two ponderous bars and dropped them noiselessly on the ground, pulled the door open, and stepped outside the fort.

It was pitch dark, and the wind was blowing a hurricane. He was upon the edge of the low bluff, and had to cling to the stockade to avoid being swept headlong into the river.

Throwing himself upon his hands and knees, he crept along the edge of the bluff, the wind in his teeth, now throwing himself flat upon the level soil as some fiercer gust tore past him, and now clinging to the rough logs of the stockade with all his strength.

Thus he crept around the southern side of the fort to the western, upon which side were the attacking savages.

There was danger here of being struck by a bullet from the fort, and arising to his feet he ran away from the stockade to the westward, guided by a small red light a half mile distant which gleamed like a fire-fly through the gloom.



MARK HEBER TAKING LEAVE OF GAY.

At the distance of a few yards from the stockade, and while still running, he uttered a low, piercing, peculiar whistle that sounded like a signal, and pressed onward without pausing.

The Indians who were yelling and dancing about the stockade hushed on the instant, and beat a silent retreat in the same direction with Pringle.

The manner of the treacherous ruffian's escape was apparent to Mark Heber and his companions when they beheld the open postern gate through which he had fled.

"We were prepared against foes outside," said Mark bitterly, "but we did not suspect treachery within. The man has escaped. And, if I'm not mistaken, the sham attack on us was gotten up to cover his retreat. The Indians will beat a retreat also as soon as he is safe."

The words were scarcely spoken when the warwhoops and yells abruptly ceased, and a tranquillity as sudden as startling reigned in its stead.

Mark secured the postern door and returned to Whitman with his report.

"The fight is over, and the rascals have gone," said Whitman. "We shall see nothing more of them. Not one of our force is wounded, and the Indians took good care to dodge about, so that I believe not one of them was even hit. They will not resume the attack with their small force, and possibly not with a larger one. We are pretty strong in our small Gibraltar."

"We will keep up our vigilance," said Mark, "until morning, but I am sure the red-skins won't return."

He was right. They did not.

Pringle hastened to the red light away on the prairie. The light emanated from a lantern held in the hands of a man, who, dressed in deer-skin frock edged with a hair fringe, with Mexican boots of finest workmanship, and a band of tall feathers on his head, above a hideously scarred face, one side of which was blue, as if freshly bruised, appeared, as he was, the chief of the small party of Indians who were now approaching him swiftly, in their retreat from the fort.

This chief was the "Devil Chief"—Blue Jack!

"Hallo, Cap'n," panted Pringle, as he drew near, at a loping Indian-like gait. "Is it you?"

"Yes, yes. What success?" cried Blue Jack eagerly, almost breathlessly.

"I've got the box," was the answer, in a savage voice, as Pringle came up and halted. "I've run a narrow risk to-night, Cap'n. That girl's a regular vixen, an out-and-out fire-eater. She's afraid o' nothing, and if the attack hadn't been made the moment it was she'd had all the fort on me, and I'd been strung up to the big cotton-wood by her door. As it was, she brought her brother down on me, and he nearly fixed me out. I'll kill that fellow some day if I live."

"So Burk says," remarked Blue Jack grimly, "but I have promised myself that pleasure. I owe him a grudge that death alone can wipe out. The box, Pringle, the box!"

Pringle gave up the small walnut box to obtain which he had risked his life.

Blue Jack thrust it in the bosom of his belted frock.

"Look at my face, Cap'n," said Pringle. "It's all blood."

Blue Jack raised his red lantern, and the ruddy light fell full upon Pringle's face. The lower part of his beard was soaked and stiffened with blood, and across his cheek where the bullet had plowed a red lane opened between the bristles, making a long and horrible scar.

"Young Heber has set his mark on you," said Blue Jack coolly. "You'll carry that scar to your grave, Pringle. The hair won't grow over it any more than it will grow over the scar on my face! Young Heber's spoiled your beauty for you."

"I'll spoil his face!" ejaculated Pringle, with an oath. "I fired at him to-night, but the girl flew at me like a cat and flung my arm up. I can't see why I didn't kill him."

"Heber is lucky," said Blue Jack, "and 'luck is better than money,' you know. He horsewhipped Burk, and—and struck me—curse him! I'll repay him! And he's never lost a penny by us until to-night. But the possession of this box repays me for all. As to the rest of the debt, I'll pay it in due time, with interest."

The Indians now came up, with Burk in their midst, the latter in a costume half savage, half civilized. The Indians wore the scalp-locks peculiar to their race, and their narrow foreheads and high cheek-bones and bare red arms were profusely painted, as were their bare chests. They were all armed to the teeth, with rifles, revolvers, knives, and the primitive bow and arrows.

"We'll retreat out of reach of the fort gun," said the Devil Chief, in the Dakota tongue. "To the Loup creek, where we'll camp. Mount!"

The horses were picketed at a little distance farther out on the plains. The Indians hastened to their steeds, and mounted. Blue Jack vaulted upon the back of the powerful horse he had stolen from Lieutenant Fallon, and whose fleetness and strength had saved the life of the outlaw when fleeing from the pursuing soldiers. Burk and Pringle also mounted, and the party rode swiftly through the darkness, taking their course it seemed by instinct, for there was no star to guide them.

A ride of ten miles brought them to the banks of a small stream known as the Loup creek.

Here they dismounted, picketed their horses, and built a fire, finding growing wood on the bank of the creek.

Two of the Indians were appointed by the Devil Chief to serve as sentinels. The remainder lay down in their blankets and went to sleep. Pringle lay down also, and was soon snoring.

Blue Jack sat apart, upon the opposite side of the fire, and in the full glow of the flames. Burk lay on the ground, a few paces from him, his eyes fixed upon his master. He was like a faithful dog, his devotion to Blue Jack being as strong and fervent as it was unaccountable.

"It has been a successful night's work," said the desperado, with a satisfied smile, his eyes gleaming. "I have in my pocket the proofs of the girl's identity. The diamond locket that I saw in her hands, and which I saw her put back in the box; a wedding ring—I am sure I saw the ring—and there must be other trinkets, a brooch perhaps, sleeve-buttons, and a child's necklace. I remember there was a child's necklace, peculiar in workmanship, and very costly. I should know it at a glance, even without the name inside the clasp. And all these are in my hands! I possess all the proofs that the girl is—who she is!"

He drew out the little walnut box that Pringle had stolen from Gay's trunk, and turned it over and over in his hands. He seemed reluctant to open it, even while gloating over it.

The lock was small and worn. In its best days, it had been but a cheap affair. With a strong pressure of his thumbs against the lid, Blue Jack forced the lock apart, and the box flew open.

It was filled loosely with cotton. The outlaw lifted this carefully, and found—a small brass thimble, a pinchbeck brooch, and the bowl of a broken pewter spoon!

And these were the "treasures" for which he had risked so much—for which he had made an attack upon the fort—for which he had schemed and toiled!

His scarred face, uncovered by a beard, turned livid in the glare of the fire. A look came into his eyes so full of madness and hatred, that even Burk was frightened, and closed his eyes, pretending to sleep.

"Fooled—cheated—tricked—laughed at!" foamed the outlaw, almost beside himself with rage. "And the girl and the boy are making the fort merry at this moment, no doubt, with the story of how they have befooled me! Ten million curses! Blast the girl and the boy! It was her hand that arranged this cheat. She saw me at her wagon that night—she realized the importance of those jewels—and she has laid a plan to outwit me. Curse her! curse her!"

He gnashed his teeth in his fury. He clenched his hands, and shook them in the direction of the little settlement, swearing vengeance. He seized the tiny brass thimble and ground it under his heel. He seized the pinchbeck brooch, the bowl of the pewter spoon, and the walnut box, and flung them all into the fire.

And then leaping to his feet, he crossed his arms across his Herculean chest, and strode to and fro in the play of the firelight, his features distorted and hideous, his wicked soul aflame.

Burk watched him furtively, in fear and trembling.

For a time it almost seemed as if Blue Jack had ceased to be master of himself. He looked indeed like an incarnate demon. But after a while his hot and seething passions cooled, and his frightful visage settled into a grimness as terrible as it was full of menace and wickedness.

He came to Burk's side and touched him with his foot.

The man lifted his head on the instant.

"Well, Cap'n?" he said.

"We start at daybreak for the Sioux country," said Blue Jack hoarsely. "I am going for reinforcements. I shall return with fifty picked warriors, and lay waste the new settlement on the two rivers with fire and bullet and scalping knife. Thy sham of to-night shall be made a fearful reality. For Heber's sake, the whole settlement shall perish—every soul except the girl. She belongs to me!"

"What will your Indian wife say to that?" asked Burk timidly. "She's awful jealous, Cap'n."

"I do not want the girl for my wife, Burk," replied the outlaw. "She is—she is— Never mind. But never speak as if you thought I meant to marry her. She's only a child, and besides, there is a tie— Some day I may explain to you a strange story, Burk. If I had only the proofs—the proofs—but they are with the girl. I failed to get them to-night, curse her! Curse her!"

"And you mean to burn the settlement, Cap'n?"

"To the ground! Pringle has studied the inside of the fort, and shall describe it to me in every detail. I'll know every house, all the defences, even the position of the trees. With fifty picked warriors I'll guarantee to raze the new settlement at the two rivers, and kill every person in it—except the girl. And her I shall take back with me into the Sioux country. I have sworn to do this thing, Burk, and I swear again by all the demons to burn the new settlement, kill the settlers if they resist, inflict a horrible vengeance upon young Heber, and take the girl away with me. In two weeks from to-night we will descend with fire and bullets upon the doomed fort."

CHAPTER XIV.

A HUNTING EXPEDITION.

During the fortnight that followed the attack of the Indians upon the little settlement, the pioneers actively pushed forward the completion of their system of defences. The great gates of the stockade were strengthened. The block-house was built, and upon a plan much more secure than had been originally designed.

It was square in shape, and stoutly built of heavy cotton-wood logs. It was two stories in height, and the upper story, which overhung the lower one, was provided with loop-holes for defence, and to give light to the interior. There was no door to the lower floor. The upper story was reached by a ladder, which could be drawn up at pleasure.

All stores, such as food and grain, were required to be hoisted or carried to the upper floor, and then lowered through a trap-door into the lower room, which process, though inconvenient, was yet admirable for the purpose for which the building was intended.

A well was dug in the block-house; a capacious chimney was built, and the upper floor was divided into two rooms after a most peculiar fashion. The chimney was in the centre of the house, and a small room was built around it for the occupation of the women and children. The outer room, for the use of the garrison, was simply a gallery running around the inner room, which was supplied with fresh air and light through apertures high up in the walls.

This edifice was completed after two weeks hard labor by the combined exertions of fifteen men, including the boys of the settlement over seventeen years of age.

"Now we've got a safe retreat in any case," said Mr. Whitman. "We can enjoy our homes in the wilderness, knowing that we can defy the Indians. We shall all live to see the day when this region will be a very garden, blooming like a rose, and when the Indians will have been exterminated, or will have been moved farther west. Our tribulations are only for a brief period, and our reward is to be great."

This cheerfulness was shared by the other settlers. It was now July, and the defences of the little fort were all completed. The settlers were anxious to apportion their farms, although it was now too late to grow summer crops.

During the building of their fort, three wagon trains from the east and one from the west had passed the new village of Heber, and two of these trains had encamped outside the stockade for the night. The natural advantages of the spot, which had been overlooked by emigrants until Whitman and his party had settled upon it, were now looked upon by people going westward with longing and covetous eyes. It is scarcely to be wondered at, then, that the settlers were anxious to select their farms before others should arrive to put in claims.

Leaving a small force each day to garrison the fort, Mr. Whitman and his friends set to work to divide the rich prairie soil into lots of one hundred and sixty acres each, to be subsequently distributed among the settlers after an equitable manner.

Those men with sons of twenty and twenty-one years of age were desirous of taking up farms for their sons also. All were anxious to have a river front; and as the little town was founded at the junction of two rivers, all were likely to be gratified.

But, as may be supposed, some lots were of more value than others. Some lay across one or the other of the two rivers, and must be reached by boats. Some must lie at a distance of a mile or two from the fort, and some danger must attend the working of these.

The farms were to be assigned in regular quarter sections, as nearly as possible. Not one desired a portion of his farm on one side of the river or the town and the other elsewhere.

Under this system of division there was one farm far more valuable than all the rest. It was nearly square, and came up close to the stockade, comprising a fine bluff and a lower wooded shore, the grass growing to the water's edge. Upon this farm was the larger portion of the grove of cotton-wood, thickly covering some thirty acres, a small grove of cedars, and thickets of sweet-brier, and the soil was a rich loam, as indeed was all the soil in the vicinity.

Every settler, of course, desired to possess this farm. After the lots were duly staked out, the pioneers assembled in the square, in the shadow of the block-house, to apportion the lots.

Mr. Whitman mounted a log and addressed the assembly in the following words:

"My friends, we have staked out the lots in regular shape, of one hundred and sixty acres each, giving each farm a river front. They are more or less valuable according as they are nearer or farther from the fort. One of these has the magnificent grove of cotton-woods upon it. It puzzles me to assign the farms so that there shall be no discontent nor heart-burnings. As to the grove of cotton-woods, I propose we do not assign it to any farm, but keep it as a park, using the wood for general purposes, one having as much right to it as another. What do you say?"

Mr. Brown, an elderly, vigorous, hard-working man, arose and made answer.

"I think," he said, "that the idea of putting the most valuable land into a park for an infant settlement is not worth our consideration. Of course, in a division of land like this, some must fare better than others. Now I am willing to take my chances with the rest. I propose that the farms be numbered, and that we draw lots for them. I want a chance to win the grove farm, but if I fail to win it, I shall not lose my temper nor grow discontented. I shall have had an even chance with the rest, and I cannot help but be satisfied."

Mr. Halsey arose from a log on which he had been sitting, and exclaimed:

"Brown is right, Whitman. We don't want a park. Give us each and all a chance to draw the grove farm, and no one can complain. I prefer to receive my farm by lot."

The other settlers echoed the declaration.

"It is certainly the easiest way to settle the matter," said Whitman, "and no one can complain of partiality or injustice. The village lots on which our houses are built of course require no further allotment. They were assigned before building the houses. I will write down the numbers of the farms upon slips of paper. Upon one slip I will write the name, 'The Grove Farm.' The person who draws that slip is to have and hold the grove farm, and there is to be no dissatisfaction, no discontent, nor envy. You agree to this?"

The settlers answered as with one voice in the affirmative.

"To make the thing fair, and to give all an equal chance," continued Whitman, "I will write down the names of the settlers on other slips of paper. These slips I will drop into one hat; the slips with the numbers or name of the farms into another hat. A slip shall be drawn from each hat at once. Who shall do the drawing?"

Mr. Brown's eyes rested at that moment upon one of Halsey's children, a wee girl of two and a half years. She was playing among the chips in smiling unconsciousness of the importance of this first "town meeting" at Heber.

"Let that child be the instrument of fate," he said, pointing to her.

It was so agreed.

Letter paper was brought and carefully cut into slips of uniform size. Upon one set of these slips Whitman wrote very plainly the names of the farmers, including Hopkins' son, who was twenty years old, Brown's two elder sons, who were aged respectively twenty and twenty-one years, and Arnold's eldest son, who was also twenty-one.

These slips of paper he dropped into Arnold's hat, and deposited upon a log.

Then upon corresponding slips of paper he wrote the numbers of the different farms, and upon another slip he wrote at full length the name of the grove farm.

These he put into Halsey's hat, and placed it also on the log, beside the other hat.

He then wrote upon a fresh sheet of paper, against the numbers of the farms, a full description of each lot, its situation, advantages, distance from the fort, and other particulars. This was passed around, and then nailed to the wall of the block-house.

The tiny arbiter of fate, Halsey's child, was summoned from her play and instructed in the part before her. She thought it a new kind of game, and gleefully consented to act the part assigned her. Knox suggested that she should be blindfolded, to make the allotment more like a decree of fate, and, the child consenting, her pretty blue eyes were blindfolded by Whitman.

"Now one paper out of one hat and one out of the other, little one," said Whitman kindly.

The child obeyed.

"Number One, James Arnold," said Whitman, after looking at both slips of paper. "Sorry for you, Arnold. Your lot lies a mile up the river. But then you get an island, well-wooded; so after all you are fortunate."

Arnold took his slips, smiling good-naturedly, and said he was satisfied.

The child drew two more slips of paper, one from each hat.

"Number Five, John Halsey," said Whitman. "Here's your deed, Halsey," and he handed him the slips of paper. "Are you satisfied?"

"Perfectly," said Halsey, taking the papers. "I've got a good fringe of trees on the river front, though I don't know as they're any better than the rest. We have all got trees, any how."

"Number Seven, George Hopkins," said Whitman, as the small priestess drew again. "And a good farm you've got, Hopkins, although it's across the river."

"I'll have a flat boat, or a dug-out, or a raft, in the course of a week," said Hopkins contentedly. "When Heber gets to be a city, we'll have a bridge across, and I'll sell my farm for suburban residences."

"Number Ten, William Whitman—that's me!" said Whitman, as the tiny arbiter of fate handed forth two other slips. "And 'number ten' comes up to the stockade on the northern side. Very good. I never expected the grove farm—I never was very lucky—but I like 'number ten' next to the grove farm. So, after all, fate is kind to me. More slips, little girl."

The child handed up two scraps of paper, one in each chubby fist.

"The Grove Farm," said Whitman, reading the first, and pausing—"The Grove Farm—Mark Heber! Heber, you are lucky. But I don't begrudge you your luck. You have shown extraordinary pluck, energy and perseverance. You have done head-work as well as hand-work, and deserve a good streak of luck. Here are your deeds until you get them from the government."

Mark took the papers smilingly, and the settlers all congratulated him, without a spark of envy or dissatisfaction.

And this was the first signal instance of Mark Heber's good luck since beginning his new career. For the most part he had earned his success by his energy and pluck and industry, but from that day forward every success of Mark, no matter how hardly earned by him, with the sweat of his brow or the exertion of his brain, was called by the settlers Mark Heber's Luck!

The remaining farms were assigned in the same manner as the preceding ones. Every one was satisfied, and the little child who had played the part of priestess was relieved of the bandage over her eyes, and tossed up and petted to her small heart's content.

Mr. Whitman presently recalled the attention of his friends.

"It is early to sow winter grain, and late to sow summer ones," he said. "You all know that prairie soil has to be turned up with a plow and left a year to rot before it is ready for the seed. Still, we can do something. We can put in a few turnips for winter use this month or next, and in the fall we will sow winter wheat, just enough for our own use, if it should come up. We all came out with plenty of provisions to last months. We have nearly all got stock, and we can send a party to some stock ranche to buy more. The buffalo grass makes the sweetest hay, even if it is short, and we can cure a good deal for winter use, although I expect to winter my stock out on the prairie. If deep snows should fall, of course we must bring the stock in. We have all got pigs and cows. We want sheep and cattle. We must have out hunters to provide us with buffalo and antelope meat. We can thus garner our resources to weather the coming winter, and to tide over until next year's harvest."

"I'll head a party to go off for stock," said Brown. "But where will we go?"

"To a ranche over the border in Colorado," said Whitman. "Landford told me of a big stock ranche there, known as Chicago Ranche, where we can get all the stock we want. I should think that seven men, well armed and well mounted, could go to the Chicago Ranche and buy stock and drive it home in nine or ten days. Say it's ninety miles to the ranche, and you reach it in two days. Two days to select the stock, and six days in which to drive it home, would make up ten days. Or it would be safer to go with the next wagon train bound west, and you could return with one coming east. Who wants to go?"

Brown, Halsey, Amory and his eldest son, Knox, Arnold and Arnold's eldest son, volunteered to go on an expedition for stock.

As the plan was devised by Whitman, there was absolutely no danger to the seven men who were to be the agents of all the settlers. They were to go under convoy of a train, and to return with a train.

That evening the pioneers calculated in their own homes the amount of stock each could afford to buy. Mark Heber had a hundred and twenty dollars, and Gay had a hundred and twenty-five. Of Gay's money Mark borrowed one hundred dollars, which he added to his own. He then made out a list of the kind of stock he wanted, and carried the list and money that very night to Brown, who promised to make Mark's slender funds go as far as possible.

The next day at noon, a large train bound westward made its midday halt at Heber. When it went on, at one o'clock in the afternoon, the seven men who had been appointed agents to buy stock went with it. As their progress westward was to be that of the train, they were expected to be absent two weeks.

There were thus left to garrison the snug fort, in case of danger or attack, eight men, including the boys over seventeen years old.

But no one felt the slightest apprehension at this state of affairs. The Indians had not been seen since the night of the attack we have chronicled, and the pioneers thought exultantly that their system of defences was so perfect that the savages had retreated in a disgust which was likely to be permanent, and to deter them from a second visit.

It was their belief that five men within their fort could keep at bay fifty without.

The diet of the settlers since leaving Leavenworth had been for the most part salt meat, either pork or beef. They had had a few times antelope or buffalo meat, and the fresh game was a delicacy actually longed for by many of the women and children, who had lost all relish for salted viands.

As a measure preservative of health, it became necessary to procure a supply of fresh meat.

Upon the second day after the departure of the stock agents several antelopes were seen about midday, not three quarters of a mile distant from the stockade, feeding upon the rich herbage.

Mr. Whitman, standing in the open gateway of the fort, pointed them out to a group of men near him.

"If I were only a little younger," he said, "I'd bring home an antelope steak for supper. The sight of the shy, beautiful things fairly makes my mouth water."

Mark Heber scanned the horizon.

Far and wide the great level prairies lay in the midday sun without a shadow upon them save those cast by the antelopes.

"There's no danger of Indians in the daytime," said Mark, the hunting fever seizing upon him. "We are all tired of salt pork. I'll bring in an antelope, shy as the creatures are. Who'll go with me?"

Mark's eagerness was infectious.

Mr. Hopkins, Will Whitman and young Brown all volunteered.

"Well, be off then," said Whitman. "Don't go out of sight of the fort. We'll watch you from the platform inside the wall. Don't be rash, boys. We'll see who will bring home the antelope."

Mark hurried to his house. Gay sat on the door-step, trying to imitate the song of the bobolink. She smiled up at him saucily, but her face grew graver as he told her what he was about to do.

"I'll watch you from the gates, Mark," she said. "I don't somehow like to think of your killing those beautiful antelopes; but I can't always eat pork. Don't be out long, Mark. I feel nervous somehow to-day."

"Nervous, and yet singing like a bobolink!" cried Mark. "You're a little humbug, Gay. I wonder if Blue Jack didn't think so when he opened your box? And there shines your ring on your finger at this very moment."

"Yes," laughed Gay, "and my mother's locket is on my own baby necklace around my neck inside my dress. Mr. Blue Jack will have to get up in the morning if he means to get ahead of me. I have only one regret, Mark, that I couldn't know that Blue Jack was going to be at such trouble to send for my box. You see, I put that brass and pewter in it that night he peeped into our wagon, and I've never taken them out of the box since, because I have worn the jewelry day and night on my person. But if I had known that Blue Jack was going to send for the box, I'd have put in an impudent little note, like this: 'To Mister Blue Jack, with Gay Heber's compliments. Get up earlier next time.' Wouldn't he have been mad?"

"I think he must have been mad as it was," said Mark. "The note wasn't necessary. The spirit of those words was in the brass and pewter. But I must be off. The boys will be ready before me."

He went in and got his rifle and ammunition. The horse he had borrowed for the occasion was picketed in his yard, and he kissed Gay good-bye, and rode out into the square. The others were ready, and awaiting him there.

In the gayest of spirits, the little hunting expedition of four persons set out from the fort.

And there were left to garrison the whole extent of the stockade but four persons, Whitman and three boys.

These four mounted the platform, and looked out upon the hunters.

The antelopes were not found an easy prey. They scented danger from the four mounted hunters, and fled like the wind for brief distances, and then paused stupidly and allowed the hunters to come quite near them. But the wind was blowing, and the bullets veered wide of the mark, and after an hour's hunt not a shot had taken effect.

The hunters were thus lured away by the tempting game beyond the sight of those in the fort.

Whitman descended from the platform, and sat down in the shade of a big cotton-wood, the rays of the sun being almost intolerable. The boys followed his example, sitting down in the shade, after closing the gates.

For an hour or more the hunters all kept together, but Mark Heber, fancying that this formidable approach scared the game more than a single hunter could do, separated himself from his party, following a fine young antelope, which now fled, far outstripping his horse, and now paused stupidly as if in wonder.

The quarry fled to the northward, then to the eastward, Mark spurring in swift pursuit. He soon saw before him the trees bordering the river. There was a fine grove of cotton-woods upon the bank, an acre or more in extent, and this, as Mark knew, was five miles up the river from the settlement.

The antelope made for the grove with flagging speed.

Mark spurred after her, full of hunter's zeal.

The antelope gained the wood, and plunged into it. She did not come out, and Mark urging on his horse, rode into the chilling shadows of the trees in relentless pursuit.

He was in the very midst of the grove, when suddenly savage Indians started up in front of him, behind him, and on either side of him, a full dozen of painted savages of the Sioux tribe. And among them was Burk, Mark's sworn and revengeful enemy.

"Close in on him, braves!" cried Burk, in an exultant voice. "We saw you coming, Master Heber, and we lay in wait for you! I told you I'd be revenged on you, and my hour is come. Close in on him, Dacotahs!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE FORSAKEN BRIDE.

BY MRS. EMILY THORNTON.

"O, father, must this marriage go on? My soul shrinks from this trial!"

"Daughter, be more courageous. Surely, with your bridal robes upon you, the clergyman waiting to perform the ceremony, you would not recall your promise?"

"But this man I am to marry acts in such a singular manner! To think of his meeting me at the church door, instead of coming to the house, and going in my company. Father, it is very hard!"

"But it will soon be over," returned Mr. Morris. "Then, when you are daily thrown together, you will learn to love him, for he is handsome, intelligent, and certainly a good man. Cheer up, Margaret, my child, and delay no longer. The hour has come, and all is ready."

* * * * * *

The morning was dark and foggy. Ominous clouds seemed gathering around the sky, while distant thunder told of a coming shower.

Yet, notwithstanding the unsatisfactory state of the weather, two carriages drove to the entrance of a well-known church on —— Square, London. From one, Mr. Morris and his daughter descended; from the other a solitary gentleman sprang, and with anything but a joyful expression upon his handsome face, stepped to the side of the trembling girl, and quietly saluting both, took her hand from her father's arm and drew it under his own. They waited after ascending the steps a moment, for other carriages to be relieved of their occupants, then, followed by a troup of bride's-maids and groom's-men, they entered the well-filled church, and kneeling before the altar, responded audibly to promises required by the officiating clergyman.

After Francis Thompson and Margaret Morris had been pronounced husband and wife, the strange pair passed forth together, entering the carriage that had brought the father and daughter to the spot.

Once, during the drive to the residence of Mr. Morris, the groom addressed a few words to his companions, referring to the unpleasant weather, which elicited a brief reply, and then again the three were silent. The distance to the house, however, was fortunately short; and when in the parlor, surrounded by friends, the murmur of voices took the place of silence, and the reception hours passed as pleasantly as usual.

Finally the guests began to disperse, and during the brief excitement of departure the bride felt her husband press a note into her hand, and the next moment she saw him, hat in hand, pass from the front door, and felt sure that the next carriage that rolled away bore him from the spot.

It was indeed the case; for, to the astonishment of all present, the bridegroom had departed, leaving his wife in her father's house.

Leading his poor young daughter away from the amazed group of sympathizers to an unoccupied apartment, Mr. Morris took from her trembling hand the following note, which he read with a stern expression and angry eye:

"Mrs. Thompson—*Dear Madam:* You will probably be surprised at my abrupt departure, and it requires but few words to explain my position. This marriage is deeply repugnant to my feelings. Nothing but a solemn promise to my dying father could possibly justify this sacrifice. We are so nearly strangers to each other, never having met but six times, and that in the most formal manner, during the past three months, I am well assured that this business compact of our parents is as abhorrent to you as it is to myself. Feeling certain, therefore, that neither of our hearts will grieve over a separation, I exonerate you from all wifely obligations, giving you perfect freedom of action, while at the same time I entirely and forever relieve you of my presence. Respect to my dear father's memory will ever cause me to recollect that you are my lawful wife, chosen by him; therefore my purse and its contents will ever be at your command; but further than annually to remit you certain sums, you will never hear from me. I am not a patient man, therefore the ceremony that united us will ever prove a source of unavailing bitterness, but rest assured it will be faithfully borne in mind. Farewell.

"Francis Thompson."

Eight years have passed since the singular event took place we have just related, and once more I would take my readers to the same mansion on Regent Square. But the silent gloom pervading is far different from the bridal paraphernalia that then greeted us. Death has been here now, the funeral of Mr. Morris having taken place a few days before. As we gaze around the parlor, from which all the furniture has disappeared beneath the auctioneer's hammer, we see merely an elderly gentleman and a young woman, whose deep mourning robes, heavy crape bonnet and vail, as well as her tearful eyes, assure us that she is the bereaved daughter of the late Samuel Morris. Yes, Margaret Thompson, the lonely wife, is about going to a new home, a new country, and, if possible, to a new and happier life. She has accepted the offer of dear friends, Mr. Beverly and wife, to become to them a daughter, taking their name and going with them to a new home they would seek in America, thus forgetting, if possible, the troubles that had been planted in her young life. She was now twenty-four years of age, and in appearance very different from the timid, sallow girl of sixteen who knelt at the altar so many years before. Beautiful in feature, perfect in form, and highly intelligent, having spent the most of these years in retirement and study, she stepped into the carriage for which we found her waiting, with her adopted father, with a lighter heart and more hopeful nature than she could have dreamed possible when bidding farewell to the only home she had ever known. The hours passed there, however, had been so sad since the death of her mother, that she longed for other scenes and other duties. Mr. Beverly and wife knew well the sad history of their young friend, and feeling that she could sympathize with them in the loss of their only daughter, they had urged her to fill the vacancy her death had made in their hearts; and as they designed spending a year travelling around the United States, then settling in some quiet home near New York, they were delighted when she accepted their proposal, and prepared herself to accompany them.

Madge, as her new parents loved to call her, improved exceedingly in spirits, health and beauty during the voyage and year of travel. With her adopted parents she enjoyed every new object of interest, and proved herself a fearless and enthusiastic lover of adventure; and when at length a splendid place at ——, about six miles from the city of New York, had been purchased and fitted up in a superb manner, she was just as ready to enter gracefully into the pleasures of domestic life. The spot selected for their new home overlooked the Hudson, while the grounds that surrounded the house were separated simply by a low hedge from the equally beautiful residence occupied by a Mrs. Lee, a widow, who kept the house, and thus made a home for her only brother, the owner of the place, now daily expected from an extended tour abroad.

One lovely evening, Madge sat alone upon the cool piazza, musing sadly over the past, with her eyes fixed upon the dancing waters of the river, on which the moonbeams quivered, lighting it up very beautifully. She loved this charming view; but now, although she gazed upon it, her heart and thoughts were far away.

Mr. and Mrs. Beverly had been to the city all the afternoon, and would not return until late in the evening; while Mrs. Lee, her neighbor, whose society she enjoyed exceedingly, she had not seen that day—her attention being taken up, she knew, by her brother's safe arrival.

She felt rather lonely then, and was not sorry when her sad thoughts were scattered by seeing Robert, Mrs. Lee's coachman, approaching the spot.

"Well, Robert," she asked, noticing the man hesitated before speaking, "have you any message?"

"Why, yes, Miss. My mistress has been thrown from a carriage and badly hurt. We would like Mrs. Beverly or yourself to come over, if convenient."

"Certainly. I will come, as mamma is away from home," replied Madge.

After informing a servant of her departure from the house, she descended the steps and, followed by Robert, disappeared through an opening in the hedge into their neighbor's grounds. Passing up the broad staircase, she entered Mrs. Lee's room, and approached the bed upon which she lay.

As she did so, a gentleman arose and made room for her by the side of her friend.

"Is she very ill?" asked Madge, without looking up.

"She is badly hurt, I fear, although not in danger of death. I returned home this morning, and the day being so fine, took my sister to drive. After leaving Central Park, on our return, the horses took fright, and we were both thrown to the ground. Since then she has been unconscious, except at intervals. The blow was upon her head; but the physician, who has just left, says she will recover, if no inflammation of the brain ensues. Applications of cold water are to be constantly made, to reduce any such tendency. May I ask you to sit beside her while I prepare the quieting medicine he ordered?"

"Certainly, sir. I will do all in my power for my poor friend. Mamma was away, or she would have accompanied me," she answered, but her voice trembled as she spoke, and her lips grew pale, for in the man before her she recognized her husband, Francis Thompson.

Turning her face away from his gaze, she bent over Mrs. Lee, and whispered soothing, loving words in her ear, which she saw were heard and appreciated.

Turning then to the injured head, she quietly laid cloths wet in the coldest water upon its heated surface, until the patient became more calm and composed.

"Stay by me to-night, Madge, will you not?" she asked.

"Yes, if you wish it. I am so sorry to see you in this condition."

"I am glad you are willing to remain, Miss—Pardon me if I inquire your name?" said Mr. Thompson.

"Miss Beverly, this is my brother," said the invalid. "I should have introduced you before, but—" A spasm of pain interrupted her, succeeded by a strange faintness.

"Don't distress yourself to talk, sister. Miss Beverly and I will nurse you well all night. Keep yourself perfectly calm, and strive to sleep. Meanwhile I will wheel this comfortable chair to your side for your friend, while I sit upon the sofa in the corner. I believe," he added, in a low tone, "that my poor head has been jarred, it aches so violently."

"Why, sir," exclaimed Madge, "you are indeed hurt! Your hair is quite matted with blood, and your lips are very pallid. Please allow me to see to what extent you are injured."

Sinking into a seat, the man offered no objection, when, bringing some water, she carefully washed away the blood, clipping the brown curls from the wound, and drawing together the cut, applying small strips of adhesive plaster, which she found in a medicine chest upon the table.

"Thank you, Miss Beverly, you are very kind; but I assure you I am sorry to give you so much trouble."

"It is no trouble, sir. I am glad to be of service. Will you now oblige me by lying down upon the sofa and allow me to watch over you both?"

Placing a pillow for his head, Madge would not rest until her request had been complied with; then arranging the night lamp where his eyes, as well as his sister's, were shaded, she seated herself between them, after sending a message home, and commenced her long night vigil.

Many and varied were her emotions during those hours, sitting thus, so unexpectedly, with her hand clasped by her husband's sister, and that husband lying within two feet of her chair.

She need not have been anxious, for the eyes that rested so often upon her face saw not the slightest resemblance, in the pure complexion, the ruby lips, and the queenly form before him, to the poor young wife he had so strangely deserted nine years before. Then the name was so entirely different that he might well be deceived. He had been united in the holy bonds of marriage to Margaret Morris, while Madge Beverly was the lady whose soft hand had so soothed his weary head, and whose blue eyes so often gazed anxiously upon him.

Several times during the night Mr. Thompson arose, and approaching the bed, felt her pulse, and administered medicine to his injured sister; then, after speaking low words of encouragement to the attentive nurse, he again sought the sofa. But Madge knew, by the contracted brow and compressed lips, that he was really in pain.

"Excuse me," she said at length, in a low tone, advancing to his side. "Your sister sleeps quietly now, while you are wakeful and restless. Mamma is subject to severe headaches, and I soothe her sometimes by gently bathing her forehead. May I apply the same remedy to yours?"

"If you please. The sudden jar of the fall, and the fright occasioned by seeing my sister insensible, has given me a sick headache. It is nothing serious, only annoying."

"Then perhaps I can relieve you," said Madge.

Placing a cushion upon the floor beside him, she knelt upon it, and pouring some alcohol into her hand, she gently passed it over his brow. Closing his eyes, Mr. Thompson lay motionless, in a half-dreaming state, really relieved by the steady, soothing pressure of those soft fingers. Once he looked up, and said:

"I ought to be grateful for this pain, since it has given me a pleasure I have never experienced since the days of boyhood, the pleasure of being nursed. We healthy bachelors lose a great deal of life's sweet domestic courtesies. Thank you, Miss Beverly. Your touch has a mesmeric influence: I feel very sleepy."

"Sleep then, for that would be your best medicine," she murmured.

A few strokes more in perfect silence rewarded her efforts well; for she had the satisfaction of seeing him in a refreshing slumber. Rising softly, she again returned to Mrs. Lee.

Just at day-break Mr. Thompson awoke.

"I hope you are better, sir," she remarked, as he came toward her.

"Better? I am quite well, and I must thank you for dispersing a tedious pain. You are a splendid nurse, Miss Beverly; how came you so thoroughly to understand this womanly, yet difficult gift?"

"Much illness among my near relatives has often placed me in a sick-room, Mr. Thompson. An only daughter has frequent opportunities to exercise such a gift, if she will."

She stopped. She could have told of seven weary months passed by her father's bedside, of many a pang soothed for him, of many a watchful night and tireless day spent by his side, until death snatched him from her tender care. But she forbore. To this man her early life must be a closed book; not a hint must he receive that Mr. Beverly was not her father.

A few hours later found her in her own apartment upon her knees, imploring her Heavenly Father to strengthen her for all the trials yet awaiting her. To her adopted parents she said not a word in reference to this strange meeting. They had been told her husband's name, but it was such a common one she felt sure they would never think their neighbor the same man. She could not tell them, for she could not bear to be commented upon whenever a meeting took place.

Madge was with Mrs. Lee constantly during her illness and convalescence. She had made herself so useful, so necessary to her comfort, that she could not resist the many calls for her presence; therefore several hours each day were spent in her company. These visits were grateful also to the brother, who passed most of his time in the library, the door of which opened into the sitting-room, where she was soon able to be taken. Sometimes the tones of her voice drew him thither, as she read some poem, or thrilling tale. She was a beautiful reader, her voice having a richness that gave unspeakable pleasure. Sometimes she sang, accompanying herself on the guitar or piano; then, as he softly entered the adjoining room, he fairly revelled in the wealth of melody that almost held him breathless. Sometimes he entered and blended his fine voice with hers; but when again alone, his thoughts grew so bitter that for days he would shun her presence, while a deep dejection seemed to brood over his heart.

One day Madge left, after a pleasant hour with Mrs. Lee, but on reaching the garden, discovered that her embroidery had been forgotten; therefore hastily retracing her steps, she was about reëntering the sitting-room, when hearing her name pronounced, she stopped, and became an involuntary listener to the following conversation:

"Sister, when did these neighbors of ours buy that place?"

"About six months since. What do you think of Madge?"

"She is the most accomplished and beautiful woman I ever met. Her features seem to remind me of some one I have seen before, but whose I cannot tell. Were it not for that fatal marriage I could easily love her, as such a woman I would have chosen, could I have been allowed to follow my own wishes."

"And an amiable, lovely wife you would have had. Poor father! he little knew the blight he was casting over your whole life! Where is that girl?"

"She is in London, I presume. Last week I was looking over some English papers that arrived during my absence, and I then learned for the first time that Mr. Morris died a year and a half ago. Poor girl! she must have been lonely indeed. Sister, since our accident and narrow escape from death, I seem to look upon life with different eyes. I fear I have treated my wife very unjustly. Ah me! I would that I were free; but as I am not, my conscience of late is constantly accusing me."

Madge waited to hear no more. Softly she glided away, but as she did so she inwardly thanked God that He had at last allowed her to hear this confession from the lips of her husband.

One afternoon Madge wandered to the river. Her heart had been greatly tried by noticing Mr. Thompson's deep and increasing dejection. She scarcely knew how to proceed. Should she hasten to reveal herself, and thus comfort one whose sorrows gave her pain; or should she leave the matter entirely in the hands of Providence? was a question she often asked, but could not answer. Throwing herself upon a rustic seat under a noble elm, one of a shady grove left standing there, she was soon lost in a reverie so deep that she did not hear a step approaching, nor was she aware of Mr. Thompson's presence until he spoke.

"Miss Madge, may I join you a moment in this lovely spot?"

"Certainly," was the reply, as she made room for him upon the bench; "this is too fairy-like a place to enjoy alone. I am glad to have a companion."

"I fear I shall prove a gloomy one, and I almost hesitate to bring sadness where all should be joyful."

"I have noticed your great depression of spirits lately; may I ask the cause of your trouble?" she returned, in trembling tones.

"I would be glad to relate my history, if it would not weary you. Relating my trials to another, instead of pressing them so closely in my own heart, would be a relief; and certainly I need sympathy. But listen, and you shall judge yourself of the hardness of my lot. My father, upon his death-bed, obtained from me a promise to marry the daughter of a man he had loved from early youth. Imagine my feelings when thus sacrificed. I had promised, and I could not retract. The time of the appointed marriage drawing near, I sought my future bride, and found her a pale, homely girl, almost a child. My soul realized in her presence a fearful shock. However, I went through the ceremony on the day appointed, and then bade her farewell. She is my wife, but from that day to this we have never met. Since then I have avoided all womankind, my sister being my only companion when at home; but the tempest within me has made me a restless mortal, therefore home detains me but little. I have travelled far and wide, placing the ocean between my wife and myself, and never until very lately have I realized that I have sinned in this matter. She is my wife, and in taking the marriage vows upon me I promised *never to forsake her.* That promise I have broken. I do not love her, yet I long to do my duty. Tell me, as a sister, your candid opinion. Shall I return to my wife, and do you think she will receive me?"

Madge remained silent, the throbbing of her heart becoming almost painful.

"You do not answer," said the unhappy man. "Is it because you fear to say that you think she would treat my repentance with scorn?"

"No, no, Mr. Thompson, think not so. Go to your wife, by all means, and if she is a true Christian woman, she will gladly welcome you. Excuse my silence. I was only thinking how fully I could sympathize with you in your many trials. Strange as it may seem, my life history is exactly similar to yours. I also was united, in accordance with a promise given to my father, to a gentleman almost a stranger to me."

"Is it possible! O, my friend, have you also thus suffered? How long since he died?"

"He still lives, although he died to me the very day of our marriage."

"Madge?"

"He placed a letter in my hand immediately after our wedding reception, saying, that although legally married, we must ever live apart."

"Am I going mad?" exclaimed the excited man, springing to his feet. "Madge, in mercy tell me that lunatic's name."

"Sir, his name was Francis Thompson, and mine was Margaret Morris. I am Mr. Beverly's adopted daughter."

"And you are also my wife! O, darling! can you ever forgive me? ever love me?"

"I do forgive you, believe me, fully and perfectly."

"But with forgiveness I would have more. I would have the heart's affection of the wife I can now truly say I love."

"That, my dear husband, is yours, now and forever," said Madge, as she glided into the arms that opened to receive her.

The surprise and excitement in the two houses, occasioned by the announcement that evening of the true state of affairs, may well be imagined. Every one, even to the servants, congratulated the happy pair, and every heart rejoiced that such a sad wedding as had taken place nine years before had ended in so much contentment and joy.

Need I add that Mr. Thompson's forsaken bride became all to his heart that man could wish: their married life being to them such a continual joy, that never again was he heard to say:

"I wish I were free!"

THE CHARITY PATIENT.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Oh, but, Dr. Aylescroft, you are too generous! We did not expect such a donation as this from you!"

Miss Mildred Haven was leaning from the door of her chocolate-colored barouche, with its brown satin cushions and coat of arms emblazoned on the side, while the high-stepping horses pawed the ground impatiently, and shook their silver-plated harness, all eagerness to be gone.

Miss Haven was a fresh, fair-complexioned girl of about eighteen, with dark blue eyes and glossy brown hair—a girl who would have been considered "nice looking," had she been a poor man's daughter; but as she was Mildred Haven, niece to the wealthiest man in town, she was universally pronounced a beauty. And the smile with which she greeted Dr. Aylescroft's pencilled memoranda on her subscription list, lighted up her oval face, and displayed a very pretty set of small pearly teeth at one and the same time.

"It is of no consequence—none at all, Miss Haven," said the young physician, rubbing his white palms lightly together. "I am delighted to have the privilege of aiding your charitable schemes. The deserving poor have always been a pet hobby of mine, and I am obliged to you for affording me this opportunity."

He bowed low as the carriage rolled away from his office door, and stood watching it for a moment, ere he returned to his cigar and fire.

Joe Nickson, an impecunious young legal friend with no particular practice as yet, except that of patience, greeted him with a smile and a shrug of the shoulders.

"What's the exact amount they victimized you for, eh, old fellow?" he demanded. "An't I glad they didn't see *me*, though!"

Dr. Aylescroft sat down, and complacently viewed the fire.

"I put down twenty-five dollars."

"My dear fellow, are you crazy?" demanded Nickson, dropping his meerschaum.

"Not at all, Joseph my friend. I simply regard it in the light of a good investment."

"Eh?" ejaculated the lawyer. Dr. Aylescroft nodded.

"You—you don't mean to say that you intend to *marry* the heiress?"

"Why not I as well as another?"

"Well," quoth Nickson, "I've heard of brass before, and I've heard of coming the confidence game; but I do think, Tom Aylescroft, you're about the coolest customer! Why, she's rich, and you are poor!"

"All the more reason the financial irregularities should be equalized, my good Joseph."

"And she's a belle, and you are hanging on to the very outskirts of society."

"Wait six months, and see how it will be then," said Aylescroft composedly. "And in the mean time, as I said before, that twenty-five dollars is very well invested. Give us a light, will you? My cigar has taken advantage of the opportunity to go out."

"I wish I had some of your confounded assurance, Tom," said Mr. Nickson, as he reached a pink tissue paper spill down from the mantel.

Dr. Aylescroft inclined his head, as if acknowledging a compliment.

"Just wait and see," said he calmly.

Meanwhile Miss Haven was rolling homeward, very agreeably disappointed in the results of her collecting tour. If she had been more a woman of the world, she would easier have comprehended matters. A plain, middle-aged spinster, who sewed for a livelihood, might have trudged through the very soles of her shoes without raising funds for the Grand Central Charitable Fair; but when Miss Haven went out in her chocolate-colored barouche, driven by the sober coachman with the black velvet band around his hat, the money flowed into the subscription lists as if the streams of Pactolus were let loose.

"Isn't he handsome!" said Mildred, leaning back among the carriage cushions with a little rapturous sigh. "Oh, we *must* have him for our party next week."

"Humph!" said Miss Plattersley, the elderly companion who rode on the back seat.

"So kind of him to subscribe so generously," said Mildred. "I intend to have Dr. Aylescroft at our next reception."

And as the heiress generally had her way in most things, Miss Plattersley did not contradict the assertion.

* * * * *

"I know it's some one crying," said Mildred. "Do, Plattersley, go and see what is the matter."

"It's only Bridget's little sister with the toothache," said the companion. "She's been whimpering there all day, cook says."

"Why don't she have it out, poor thing?"

"She's very poor, and tooth-drawing costs money; and besides, the girls are all nervous and scary, and won't go with her."

"Horrid things!" said impulsive Mildred. "Can't *you* go?"

"With this neuralgia in my face?" And the companion put on an injured air.

"Ring for the coachman."

"He's gone home half an hour ago."

"Stuff and nonsense!" cried Mildred. "I'll go myself."

"Mildred!"

"Why not? I'll take her round to Doctor Aylescroft's. He's so benevolent and large-hearted he'll never think of charging her a cent. Where's my water-proof cloak, and my blue vail? Quick—make haste, before the poor creature sobs her heart out. Not proper? Fiddlestick! Come along, child."

And Mildred Haven, deaf to the piteous remonstrances of Miss Potentilla Plattersley, boldly sallied forth into the starry, sparkling atmosphere of the winter night.

It was late, and Dr. Aylescroft had shut up his office and retired into the snuggery of the back parlor, there to spend the rest of the evening with a French play, a cigar, and a glass containing a fragrant compound of lemon peel, sugar and spirits, mollified with a little hot water. Into this sanctum came the voice of Maggie, the door girl:

"Plase, docther, there's a poor girrel here, crazy entirely with the toothache; an' would ye pull it, for sweet charity's sake?"

"No, I won't!" said Dr. Aylescroft, in a voice as different from his accents of the afternoon as vinegar from honey. "This isn't the town dispensary. Tell her to go—"

"But, sir—"

"Clear out, I say!" with a stamp of the foot. "I've been bled just about as much to-day as I can stand. Hang this charity business, say I!"

Miss Haven, standing just inside the vestibule doors, with one arm round the poor little Irish girl's neck, heard every word of the colloquy, and her warm impulsive heart boiled within her.

"Come, child," she said quietly, "we will go somewhere else."

"Docther, docther!" pleaded Maggie, "it's the young lady that was here in a carriage this afternoon, wid the little girl. An' it's yerself wouldn't give me the chance to spake a word."

"Eh? What?" and Dr. Aylescroft jumped hurriedly up. "Why didn't you say so before, you idiot? Miss Haven—Miss Haven, I beg your pardon, I am sure, for exposing you to such an absurd chapter of accidents! It was altogether a misunderstanding—it—"

"Do not let us interrupt your leisure, sir," said Miss Haven, with a stinging accent of scorn in her clear voice. "As you say, it would indeed be hard for me to bleed you further to-day. I will go on to Dr. Wilcox's."

And she swept out of the house like a tragedy actress, leaving the discomfited young physician to chew the cud of his own unsatisfactory meditations.

Dr. Aylescroft's "investment" was by no means a profitable one. The heiress never sent him cards to any of her receptions; and he had the very questionable gratification of knowing that he had only himself to thank for it.

THE OLD STAGE-COACH.

BY CALEB DUNN.

Up through the village street I hear
The stage-coach rumbling past,
And out in the air, in sharp notes clear,
The driver blows his blast:
Tallyho! tallyho!
And the horses neigh as they shorten the way
That leads to the tavern where the echoes say,
Tallyho!

From every window bright eyes gleam,
And many a door ajar
Holds many a form and many a dream
Of the news that comes from afar.
Tallyho! tallyho!
Thus the driver blows as the stage-coach goes
Up the street with its freight of joys and woes—
Tallyho!

At the tavern side a hundred wait
The coming of the coach,
And hearts beat quickly as the gait
Of the horses makes near approach.
Tallyho! tallyho!
For the driver's horn may make hearts forlorn,
Bringing news of sorrow and grief new-born—
Tallyho!

But joy may come with the old-time stage,
And wanderers may return
Who 've tarried afar for nearly an age
Since they left the village fern.
Tallyho! tallyho!
And thus the cry of the driver may fly
Through the air as a token of pleasure nigh—
Tallyho!

But whether good or whether ill
The tidings be it brings,
We wait for the stage-coach's coming still,
And the song the driver sings.
Tallyho! tallyho!
For the stage is a bond with the city beyond,
Where dwelleth so many of the loved and fond—
Tallyho!

* * *

A DARING GAME;

OR,

Neva's Three Lovers.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE PUZZLE OF NEVA'S WHEREABOUTS.

On going up to town with Sir John Freise and Mr. Atkins to engage in the search for Neva Wynde, who had so strangely and mysteriously disappeared, Lord Towyn had left orders with the steward of his marine villa to forward to him in London without delay any and all letters that might arrive to the address of the young Earl. And so, while he prosecuted his researches with desperate energy, Lord Towyn half expected by every post some news from his young betrothed.

The three guardians of Neva's estate were sadly puzzled and thoroughly alarmed, but for Neva's own sake they kept the mystery to themselves. Mr. Atkins urged that no detectives be taken into their confidence, and that no newspapers be permitted to publish the strange story.

"We shall do as well as any detectives," said the attorney, "and if there is any game afoot, we will not set the villains who are at work in it upon their guard."

"Villains?" echoed Sir John Freise disapprovingly. "The thing is mysterious, Mr. Atkins, but it is susceptible of explanation. Had it not been for Miss Wynde's promise to write daily to Lord Towyn, and her failure to comply with that promise, we should have suspected no harm. 'Villains' is a strong word to apply to Miss Wynde's companions. Miss Wynde may have fallen ill on the way to Wynde Heights, or the plan of the tour may have been changed. In fact, one of these alternatives doubtless contains the truth. But 'villains,' Mr. Atkins—the word troubles me. To whom do you apply it? Certainly not to the beautiful lady who was the wife of our friend Sir Harold Wynde, and who was so loved and trusted by him that he constituted her the sole personal guardian of his beloved daughter?"

"And who so appreciated her husband's love and noble qualities," said Mr. Atkins dryly, "that in one year from his tragic death she was receiving the loving attentions of a Craven Black, and in fifteen months after Sir Harold's death became the wife of a Craven Black! Bah! I was never deceived in Lady Wynde, not even when Sir Harold brought her home to Hawkhurst. She is a bold, designing, unscrupulous creature, and it is as well that Sir Harold died before she broke his heart."

"Mr. Atkins, your harsh judgment amazes me—"

"I imagine, Sir John Freise," said the attorney, "that in your secret soul your opinion of Mrs. Craven Black is not much higher than mine. Have you been blind to the insatiable vanity, and the vulgarity and ill-taste of the widow of Sir Harold Wynde, who, fifteen months after losing the noblest husband the sun ever shone on, converts that husband's house into a ball-room, and sets his church bells ringing and his tenantry dancing at her marriage with a gambler and adventurer, unworthy even to breathe the same air with Sir Harold's pure young daughter? You look shocked, Sir John. If it were necessary, I could give you my further opinion concerning Mrs. Craven Black, but you are sufficiently shocked already."

"You said, Mr. Atkins," said Lord Towyn, "that you thought Mrs. Black unscrupulous. I cannot believe her as base as you think, but I have a question to submit to you and Sir John. When I asked Miss Wynde to become my wife, she told me that it had been her father's last wish that she should marry Rufus Black—"

"Impossible!" cried Sir John and Mr. Atkins, in a breath.

"Miss Wynde showed me a letter purporting to have been written by Sir Harold the night before his sudden death," said Lord Towyn. "I have the letter with me, and a study of it may throw light upon a matter that certainly looks dark to me. I could almost make oath that the deceased Baronet never wrote this letter. It deceived Neva completely, if it prove, as I have declared it, a forgery."

He produced the letter, and gave it into the hands of Mr. Atkins. The attorney read it aloud, weighing each phrase and turn of sentence.

"Sir Harold wrote it," declared Sir John Freise, without hesitation. "I have heard him express himself in those quaint, oddly turned sentences a hundred times. Those pet names for his daughter, so tender and poetical, were surely written by him. Miss Wynde accepted the letter as genuine, and I do the same without question."

"And you, my lord?" inquired Atkins.

"It seems to me a forgery," said Lord Towyn. "Rufus Black confessed to Neva that he had had no personal acquaintance with Sir Harold Wynde."

"That is odd," declared Sir John, puzzled. "Perhaps Sir Harold was not quite in his right mind when he wrote the letter. His presentiment of approaching death may have unsettled his judgment; but that is preposterous. I can't explain the incongruities, but I persist in my opinion that Sir Harold Wynde wrote the letter."

"What is your opinion, Mr. Atkins?" demanded Lord Towyn.

"Where is Rufus Black?" asked the lawyer abruptly.

"Down at Hawkhurst. He remains there during the absence of the bridal party," answered the young Earl, in surprise.

"And Rufus Black has confessed to Miss Wynde that he was not personally acquainted with Sir Harold Wynde?" mused the attorney. "My opinion about young Black is, that he is a well-meaning but weak-souled lad, just the person to be made a dupe or instrument in the hands of more unscrupulous and daring souls. I don't dislike the boy. If he were his own master, or had a different father, he'd be a decent fellow."

"What do you think of his father, Atkins?" inquired Sir John.

"I think he's a villain."

"And what do you think of this letter, Atkins?" asked Lord Towyn.

"I think," said Atkins quietly, "that it is a forgery. More, I know that it is a forgery. Sir Harold Wynde was too tender a father to attempt to control his daughter's choice of a husband in a manner so singular. The truth is, Craven Black has begun some sort of game against the Wyndes, and if it don't date further back than Sir Harold's death, I am mistaken. I see you look distressed, Sir John, so I will keep my ideas to myself until I can prove their value. Lord Towyn, will you allow me to retain this letter for the present, to study at my leisure?"

The young Earl assented, and Atkins secured the letter on his person.

"And now what are we to do?" asked Sir John.

"I shall take a turn up into Yorkshire, and have a look at Wynde Heights for myself," said Atkins. "You had better remain here, Sir John, and not expose yourself to useless fatigue."

"I shall go with you, Atkins," declared the young Earl.

Sir John Freise was anxious to accompany them, but he was scarcely able to bear the fatigue of so hurried a journey, and permitted himself to be overruled. He agreed to remain at their hotel, the Langham, until the return of his friends from the north, and that very evening Lord Towyn and Mr. Atkins departed for Yorkshire.

They arrived in due time at Wynde Heights, a lofty hill crowned with a beautiful, wide-spreading villa, built after the Italian style, and having long colonnades. There were ample grounds attached to the villa, a hundred acres or more in extent. Lord Towyn and Mr. Atkins drove out to the place in a cab, and alighting at the carriage porch rang loudly for admittance.

An old housekeeper, a Yorkshire woman, with a broad face and quiet manners, and with but little of the usual Yorkshire burr in her speech, opened the door cautiously after a long delay, and peeped out at them with apparent timidity.

"How do you do, ma'am?" said the lawyer, raising his hat to her respectfully. "We have called to see Miss Wynde and Mrs. Craven Black."

"The leddies are not here, sir," answered the housekeeper.

"Not here!" exclaimed Atkins. "But Mrs. Black said they were coming here."

"Her leddyship wrote to me to have the house ready for her, after her new marriage," said the housekeeper, "and to engage servants, which I did. And about two weeks ago I got a letter from her leddyship, telling me to dismiss the servants and shut up the house, as her leddyship had decided not to come to the Heights, and I obeyed orders."

"Will you show us that letter?" demanded the lawyer. "We are the guardians of Miss Wynde's estate, and find it necessary to see the young lady at the earliest possible moment. We expected to find her here, but the letter may afford us some clue to her whereabouts. This gentleman is Lord Towyn, and I am William Atkins, the attorney of the Wynde family."

The housekeeper threw wide open the door of the house. Both names were familiar to her, and she welcomed the visitors as those having a right to the hospitalities of the place.

"Come in, my lord; come in, sir," she exclaimed. "I will get the letter for you."

The visitors followed her into a cool, unused parlor, and seated themselves, while the woman hurried away in quest of the letter of which she had spoken.

"I had an idea that the Blacks might be stopping here secretly," said Atkins, in a low voice; "but I've changed my mind, my lord. They have not been here. The housekeeper's face is honesty itself. We'll have to look elsewhere. I'm sorry we've wasted time on the wrong tack."

The housekeeper reappeared with the letter. Lord Towyn and Mr. Atkins read it. It had been written by Mrs. Craven Black, and was to the effect that she had changed her mind, and that the bridal party would not come north that season, and ordering the newly engaged servants to be dismissed, and the house to be again closed.

Atkins sighed as he restored the letter to the housekeeper.

"We are much obliged to you, ma'am," he said, "and now we must hasten back to London. If you hear from your mistress, be kind enough to drop me a line at my address. There's my card. But it's not likely you will hear from Mrs. Black before we do."

The visitors bade the housekeeper good-morning, and hurried back to the railway station in their cab, catching the down train, and speeding on their way to London.

"I don't believe our party is in England," said Atkins musingly, as they steamed swiftly down the line to the southward. "It would be like the Blacks, if they had any game afoot, to make for the Continent. Our next point is to make inquiries at the docks, or at the railway stations."

They arrived in London in the morning, and hastened to the Langham hotel, where they had an interview with Sir John Freise, who was looking worn and ill under all this suspense and anxiety. The three gentlemen devoted the day to visiting the various railway stations and offices of the Continental boats. They visited also the foreign packet-boats lying in dock, and toward evening learned from the steward of an Ostend boat, that a party such as was described, consisting of two ladies and one gentleman, had crossed the Channel to Ostend at about the time indicated by Atkins.

"Thank Heaven! We are on the track!" breathed Sir John.

"Atkins and I will start for Ostend by way of Dover this very night," said Lord Towyn, all ardor and impatience.

Atkins drew out a golden sovereign, which he held tantalizingly before the eyes of the steward.

"Answer a few more questions," said the attorney, "and this is yours, my good fellow. Describe the gentleman who accompanied the two ladies."

The steward hesitated, eyeing the coin with greedy eyes.

"He was tall and fair, with mustaches," he said slowly, as if fearing the description would not suit his interlocutor, "and he was dressed in black."

"That would describe Craven Black well enough," murmured Sir John.

"And the ladies?" questioned Atkins. "How did they look?"

"One was some years older than the other, and was dark, with black eyes. The young lady had lighter hair. They were going on to Brussels, and I took it that the elder lady and gentleman were newly married," said the steward, "they were that sickish, begging your pardon."

"There's no doubt we are on the right track," cried Sir John, in a tone of relief.

Atkins paid the steward the promised sovereign, and led the way ashore and to the waiting cab.

"To the hotel," he ordered.

The gentlemen entered the vehicle and hastened back to the Langham. Atkins was very thoughtful and silent during the journey, but as they drove up to the hotel he said:

"We are tired, Lord Towyn, and must have rest. I propose that we sleep here to-night, and go on to Dover and Ostend in the morning. I know how anxious and impatient you are, but we must not overtask our strength. You look quite worn out."

"It is with anxiety then," said the young Earl. "I am eager to go on, Mr. Atkins, but will wait till morning as you counsel."

The three gentlemen ascended to their private parlor which they shared in common. As they entered the room, a man who was standing at one of the windows, looking out, turned and came forward to meet them.

He was the steward of Lord Towyn's marine place.

"You here, Sewel?" exclaimed the young Earl. "Is anything the matter?"

The steward, an elderly man, with a rugged countenance, as gnarled as an old oak, yet full of kindly warmth, shook his head as he answered:

"There's nothing wrong, my lord; but you ordered any letters to be sent to you, and knowing how anxious you were, I feared the letter might miscarry, and here it is. I brought it myself."

"A letter!" cried the three gentlemen in chorus, having no thought of any letter save the one they so much desired.

"It's in a lady's hand, and that's why I brought it," said the steward.

He took out his pocket-book and drew from it a small square envelope, daintily addressed and sealed.

Lord Towyn uttered a cry of joy, recognizing the handwriting at once.

"It is from Neva!" he ejaculated.

He hurried with it to a window, turning his back on his friends, and tore open the envelope, disclosing a four-page letter, signed with the name of Neva Wynde.

"Ah!" he cried aloud. "It is dated Brussels."

"We were on the right track then," said Atkins exultantly.

The young Earl perused his letter with a glad heart.

It was very tender and very sweet, full of delicate allusions to their betrothal, and was indeed such a letter as only a woman could write, yet the young lover was not satisfied. The letter lacked the straightforward simplicity that distinguished Neva, and it seemed to Lord Towyn to lack also sincerity. It had been written from the head rather than from the heart, and his first great joy and gladness gave way to a sudden and terrible sense of disappointment.

The steward, seeing that he was not wanted, went quietly from the room, intent upon securing his dinner.

Mr. Atkins and Sir John Freise approached our hero, and the Baronet laid a kindly hand upon the young Earl's shoulder.

"Forgive us for interrupting your happy reverie, Lord Towyn," he said, "but we are very anxious. Miss Wynde writes from Brussels, and in good spirits? We have been troubling ourselves for nothing?"

The young Earl did not look around, nor did he speak. He only clutched the letter tighter in his fingers.

"We have got into a panic for nothing," said Atkins, smiling. "We will keep the joke to ourselves. I would not have Mr. Black curling his cynical lips over our folly, not for worlds. No doubt Miss Wynde satisfactorily explains her previous silence, my lord, and we are free to return home again, wiser if not better men?"

The young Earl turned to his companions now, and they started when they saw how deadly pale he was, and what a look of terror and anguish gleamed from his warm blue eyes.

"Miss Wynde is not ill?" cried Sir John.

Lord Towyn raised his arm, waving the letter in the air.

"This letter is in Neva's handwriting, and signed with her name," he said, in a strained voice. "It purports to come from her, but, before God, I believe it to be a forgery! My instinct tells me that Neva never wrote it. We are upon the wrong track. Neva is not at Brussels. Perhaps she is not out of England. She is in the hands of her enemies, who have formed some foul conspiracy against her, and we, O God! are powerless to save her!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AN ADVERTISEMENT QUICKLY ANSWERED.

As the hour drew near for the arrival of the expected guest at Sandy Lands, a suppressed excitement pervaded the pert little villa from basement to attic. The servants had all received orders to wait upon Mrs. Wroat with the utmost alacrity, and some notion of her wealth and eccentricity had been conveyed to them, together with the idea that Mr. and Mrs. Blight entertained "expectations" of inheriting the old lady's fortune at her death.

Mr. Blight had remained at home upon this day, in order that his aunt-in-law might not conceive herself neglected by him. He was dressed in his Sunday garments, and was practising a smile of welcome, which had somehow a sickly look, contrasted as it was with his anxious eyes, and uneasy, apprehensive manner.

"Everything hangs upon this visit," he muttered to himself, as he stood at the parlor window, watching the road. "The old creature is a bundle of whims and caprices, and if she should leave her money to a charity we are undone. Our expenses are so heavy that I can no longer meet them. The old woman *must* make her will in my favor!"

Mrs. Blight had attired herself in a tightly fitting gown of red silk, through which her rotund figure threatened to burst at any moment, and she wore a massive gold chain, a necklace, bracelets and brooch, so that she might have personated at a fancy ball the character of an animated jeweller's shop.

"What have you got on all that jewelry for?" demanded Mr. Blight, glancing at his wife, as she complacently surveyed the reflection of her stout person and flushed face in the long mirror.

"Why," said Mrs. Blight, with a degree of worldly wisdom for which her husband, it is to be feared, had never given her credit, "there's nothing like making the old woman think we are prosperous. Money brings money. If Aunt Wroat sees us haggling about the butcher's bills and the school bills, she may think her money is going into a bottomless bucket. But if she sees us apparently rich, and without money cares, she will be more anxious to leave her money to us."

"That's so," said Mr. Blight. "I wish she'd come. Upon my soul, I do. Why didn't my uncle leave me his money, and give his wife an annuity? In that case, I shouldn't have cared what became of her, and I certainly would not have been dancing attendance upon her. All our care," he added sourly, "and all our flattery, will go for nothing if the children are not kept out of the way. And there the young savages come pellmell down the stairs."

"The 'young savages!'" moaned Mrs. Blight, in terrible reproach. "Have you the soul of a father? Can you call your own offspring savages, as if they were the children of a red Indian, or of cannibals? I'll send the poor dears back to the school-room. Between you and your horrible old aunt, the poor darlings are in terror of their lives."

Mrs. Blight hastened out into the hall, but it was now empty. The young governess and the nurse had captured all of the refractory brood save Leopold, and had conveyed them back to the school-room. Leopold had made good his escape into the garden, and was now careering about like a young colt, shouting at the top of his voice.

Mrs. Blight, hearing the noise made by her offspring, was full of terror lest her guest should arrive, and encounter the terrible infant at the gate of Sandy Lands. She rang the bell violently, and ordered Miss Bird to take charge of her pupil immediately. Lally descended to the garden to obey this command, and at the very moment when he chose to yield to her persuasions and be led away captive, a heavily laden cab drove up to the garden door, and the garden bell was rung violently.

The smart house-maid hastened to give admittance to the visitor, and the youthful Leopold, greatly excited at the prospect of seeing Mrs. Wroat, whom he detested, but cordially loved to annoy, struggled in Lally's grasp. The young girl drew her charge into the shadow of a clump of trees, and stood there, panting and flushed, just as the visitor's luggage was brought in in advance of the visitor herself.

First came three large trunks, a bandbox in a green cotton bag, a parrot in a cage, who croaked and chattered and muttered hoarse threats, and a blue silk family umbrella.

And then followed the queerest old lady Lally had ever seen. She leaned upon the arm of a tall, angular, hatchet-faced woman, her maid and constant attendant, who spoke to her mistress with a loving gentleness a mother might exhibit toward her child, but which sounded strangely from her thin, compressed lips, and who guided the faltering steps of her mistress with the tenderest care.

It was the old lady, however, upon whom Lally's gaze was fixed with strange intensity. She was thin and withered and bent, a mere wreck of a woman who had been in her day handsome, graceful and spirited. She was nearly eighty years of age, and her hands, incased in black knitted mittens, through whose open meshes her bony fingers showed, clasped a gold-headed staff, which partially supported her, the maid giving her an arm.

The old lady wore an old-fashioned brocade gown, a big travelling cloak, a white frilled cap, and a huge scuttle-shaped bonnet, such as had been worn in her early prime. But her eyes were black and keen and penetrating, full of sparkle and brightness; her hooked nose was prominent like an eagle's beak, and her mouth was curled habitually in a strangely cynical smile, or sneer.

The old lady gave a quizzical glance up at the door-way, in which stood Mr. and Mrs. Blight with outstretched arms, and then looked toward Lally. The young girl shrank back, and hurried in at the rear porch and up stairs with her young charge, just as Mrs. Wroat came in at the front door and was received by her connections with loud exclamations of welcome.

The visitor was installed in her own apartments, and she did not emerge from them for the remainder of the day. Mr. Blight went to his office. A supernatural stillness reigned throughout the villa. Mrs. Wroat chose to appear at dinner, which was served at Sandy Lands at seven o'clock; and Mr. Blight was then at home to give her his arm into the dining-room, and to pay her all necessary attentions.

She looked, as Mrs. Blight privately remarked to her husband, "like a witch of Endor," in her dinner costume of black velvet, with a scarlet velvet circular cloak thrown about her thin bent figure, and with her keen black eyes peering sharply out of her sallow face. She only needed a scarlet hood over her gray, wild looking hair, to complete her resemblance to one of the witches who are fabled to meet in lonely wood at midnight, to stir devilish messes in boiling caldrons. But then she wore a set of very fine diamonds, and even a "witch of Endor," with diamonds, would have been handsomely treated by Mrs. Blight.

The old lady was not as courteous as a female Chesterfield. In fact she snapped out spiteful remarks with the utmost unconsciousness of the rising anger of host or hostess, taking a malicious pleasure in stirring up their evil passions, knowing that they dared not give vent to them. It may be that she comprehended their time-serving, speculating natures, and realized that they paid court to her only for her money.

"Miserable wine!" she commented, with a wry face, as she set down her glass. "Gladstone, isn't it, Charles? It comes at four and six the dozen bottles, I believe. I never buy it myself. I prefer to take wormwood and vitriol undiluted."

The lawyer flushed. He prided himself on being a connoisseur of wines, and having the choicest cellar in Canterbury.

"That's real port, Aunt Wroat," he explained—"of the vintage of '42."

"Oh, they told you that, did they?" asked the old lady. "These cheap wine dealers are up to all sorts of tricks. I am surprised that you should have been taken in so, nephew Charles. At your time of life a man should have some judgment of his own."

Mr. Blight bit his lips furiously, and his wife fancied she heard the old lady chuckle softly to herself, but a glance at her did not confirm the impression.

Presently the old lady opened an attack upon the lawyer's wife. She looked at her through a quizzing-glass, and exclaimed suddenly, with apparent astonishment:

"Laura, do you think it good taste to wear all that Brummagem? If I could not get real gold, I wouldn't put on servant's ornaments; I wouldn't indeed."

"But these are real gold, Aunt Wroat," said Mrs. Blight, her voice trembling with annoyance.

"Tut, tut," said the old lady severely. "Don't contradict me. I have been used to good jewelry all my life, and ought to know it when I see it. Good gold! Ha, ha! If you don't know good gold, ask your cook."

Mrs. Blight nearly choked with rage, and sulked during the remainder of the dinner, or until her husband threw her a warning glance that reminded her that she could not afford to quarrel with their eccentric relative.

Several times during the repast the host and hostess were stirred to anger they dared not exhibit, and several times Mrs. Blight fancied she heard the old lady chuckle to herself, but of this she could not be quite sure. The Blights fawned upon their wealthy guest, swallowed her insults, and smiled distractedly at her deadliest thrusts. But both drew a sigh of relief when the old lady had been carried back into the drawing-room.

"May be she'll go to her room now?" whispered Mrs. Blight to her husband, as the old lady fanned herself vigorously, and appeared oblivious of their existence.

"No such good luck," returned the lawyer ill-naturedly. "She ought to be shut up in a lunatic asylum, the old nuisance. If it wasn't for her money, she might die in an alms-house before I'd give her shelter."

The whisper was not low, but then Mrs. Wroat was supposed to be "as deaf as a post," and of course she could not hear a sound so faint and indistinct. Mr. and Mrs. Blight had frequently vented their opinions much more loudly before her. But there was an odd snap in her eyes on this occasion, as they thus whispered to each other, and again Mrs. Blight fancied she heard a malicious chuckle, but the old lady fell to coughing in a frightful manner, and the lawyer's wife had no time for fancies, believing the old lady likely to die on the spot.

When the paroxysm was over, and Mrs. Wroat began to breathe freely, Mrs. Blight said, not without nervousness:

"You have a terrible cold, Aunt Wroat. Don't you do anything for it?"

"It's a cold that 'll last me my days," said Mrs. Wroat. "It's consumption."

"Do you employ a doctor for it?" asked the lawyer.

"Death is the best doctor," answered the old lady, with grim facetiousness. "He'll cure it for nothing. This is my last visit to you, Charles. I sha'n't last much longer."

"Oh, I hope you will live twenty years yet, and visit us every year!" cried Mrs. Blight. "Dear Aunt Wroat, we love to have you with us."

"Yes, I know it," said Mrs. Wroat, with another odd snap in her witch-like eyes. "I know it, my dear. It's time to settle my affairs. I am thinking of making my will soon."

The Blights tried to look unconcerned, but failed. Their curiosity and anxiety displayed themselves in their features.

"Shall you leave your money to a charity, dear Aunt Wroat?" inquired Mrs. Blight caressingly.

"No, no! I shall leave it to— But don't ask me. You'll know in good time."

The lawyer looked significantly at his wife.

"She means to leave it to us!" he whispered. "The old nuisance will pay us for our trouble at last."

It was singular that just then another fit of coughing attacked the old lady. When it was over, she said sharply:

"I'll go to my room. I want to be composed, or I sha'n't sleep a wink to-night. We'll visit to-morrow, but I am tired after my journey. I should like some one to play a little music for me in my room, but I don't want any sentimental songs fro Laura."

"The governess will sing an dear Aunt Wroat," said Mrs. has orders to obey you during your vi and you can command her at any or all hours."

"Then send her to me in half an hour. Charles, you can carry me up stairs."

The lawyer obeyed the intimation, carrying the old lady up to her own room and depositing her in her arm-chair. The maid was in attendance, and the lawyer and his wife bade their guest an affecting good-night, and retreated to the drawing-room to speculate upon their prospects and the state of Mrs. Wroat's health.

"Shut the door, Peters," said the old lady. "And you might open the windows and air the room after those people's presence."

Peters obeyed. She was wont to humor all the whims of her mistress.

"Did you find them the same as usual, ma'am?" she asked.

"Just the same, Peters," and the old lady sighed. "They call me 'an old cat' and 'a nuisance' in whispers, and 'dear Aunt Wroat' out aloud. Miserable hypocrites! I wanted to give them a last chance, but they have ruined their prospects with me. Bah! A pair of fawning, treacherous cats! They will never get a penny of my money beyond a guinea to buy a mourning ring."

"What shall you do, ma'am? Leave your money to a charity?"

"No, I won't do that. I won't have it scattered and doled out in sixpennies and shillings, when the whole sum might go to enrich some deserving person. I'll leave you an annuity, Peters. You're the only true friend I have on earth."

The woman caressed the withered hand of her old mistress with genuine affection.

"Have you given up all hope of finding your own relatives, ma'am?" she asked. "You tracked your niece until after her marriage with a corn-chandler, and have discovered that she died, leaving one child, a daughter, and that her husband died also. The girl may live, ma'am. She's the last of your blood, and surely it's better to give to your own kin than to undeserving connections or to strangers."

"But I can't find the girl," sighed the old lady. "I'd adopt her and leave her my money, if she was deserving of it; but I've set detectives to look for her, and they have failed to discover anything except that her moonstruck parents named her 'The Vailed Prophet,' or 'Lalla Rookh,' or some such nonsense. They did find out that she had been educated like a lady—her mother was a lady—and that she had taught music, or drawing, or something. But she may be dead by this time."

"We might advertise for her," cried the maid, all enthusiasm. "We could say, if Miss So and So would call at such a place, she would hear of something to her advantage. I do wish you would leave your money to some nice young lady, instead of these people below. I'll write the advertisement immediately. What is the name of your great-niece, Mrs. Wroat?"

"It's Kubla Khan, or Lalla Rookh Bird," answered the old lady. "There was a crack in my niece's brain, as was shown by her marriage with a corn-chandler, and by the naming of her child. I wonder what kind of a Bird the corn-chandler was," and Mrs. Wroat laughed queerly. "He left his daughter not one penny to bless herself with. Write the advertisement, Peters, at once. What geese we were, not to have thought of an advertisement before. If I can find and cage my Bird, Peters, and it turns out a good and worthy Bird, I'll leave her the whole of my fifty thousand pounds, and you shall have an annuity, Peters, and live with her and take care of her. She's only a child—not over seventeen."

Peters brought out her mistress' portable writing-desk, and sat down before it to pen the required advertisement. Being unused to composition, she spoiled a dozen sheets of paper before she produced the following, which she read aloud to her mistress:

"If Miss Lalla Bird will apply to the undersigned she will hear of something to her advantage. M. W., Mount street, London, W."

"That will do," cried Mrs. Wroat delighted. "M. W.—Maria Wroat. Very good. We'll have it in all the London papers. Make a dozen copies of it, and address them to a dozen different papers. You shall get the post-office orders to put with them in the morning. But let us see if the advertisement wants any improving. Read it again."

The maid did so. As she concluded, and before she could speak the advertisement was answered, for a low knock was heard at the door, and the young governess, in her black dress and with her young face pitiful in its sadness, entered the room, and said shyly, and with a low courtesy:

"If you please, ma'am, I'm the governess, and Mrs. Blight sent me in to play to you. My name is Miss Bird."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

* * *

A JUVENILE RUSE DE GUERRE.

Our citizens may not generally have approved the trick which the boys played not long since upon old Badger, who keeps the grocery store where beer and other moist things are sold; but certain it is that they did not seriously condemn, and we fear that most of them—even the sober ones—laughed in their sleeves. In front of Badger's store is an open space, and the boys were in the habit of playing ball there, which sport greatly annoyed the old publican, though it did him no earthly damage. He ordered them off, but they would not go. He appealed to the constable, and the constable said he had no authority in the premises. It was in the Autumn, and the days were cool; but not so cold as to drive the boys from their pastime. At length old Badger opened war on his own account. The next time the boys started their game he stood at his door and watched, and when the ball chanced to roll near him he pounced upon it, and threw it into his stove, and burned it up. A second and a third ball shared the same fate.

The boys drew off for a day or two; but by and by they appeared again, this time with a brand-new ball, large, round and hard. The game commenced, and by and by the ball flew near to the store door, where Badger was on the watch, upon which he seized it, and consigned it to his stove, as he had done its predecessors. The stove was a great, square, cast-iron affair, and a good fire of well-seasoned hickory wood was burning therein. The boys did not draw near, as on former occasions, but watched in the distance. Badger smiled triumphantly. But anon his smile was struck out as though by an earthquake. His stove burst and went up, with a report like the discharge of a hundred-pound Parrot. Glass ware and toddy sticks were promiscuously mixed up. A keg of r. g. whiskey flew one way and a barrel of beer went another. The top of the store was rent, and the shattered plastering made a paste upon the floor with the running beer. No lives were lost.

Badger tried to get warrants issued against certain of the boys, who, he declared, had filled the ball with gunpowder on purpose to blow him up. Whether said warrants were ever granted, or not, I cannot say; but I know they were never served. And I know that the boys pursued their pastime thereafter in the square, and that Mr. Badger did not burn up any more of their balls! S. C., JR.

* * *

CANNOT BE MARRIED UNLESS THEY CAN READ AND WRITE.—In some of the States of Germany, there is a system pursued which is attended by very beneficial results in diffusing knowledge among the common people. The law does not allow a man to be married unless he can read, write and cast accounts; and any one who employs a workman that cannot read and write, is liable to a heavy penalty. At the same time provision is made for public schools, to be paid in part by government.

IFTY YEARS.

S. C. [illegible] THOMAS.

[illegible] member, David,
This was our wedding-day?
We two, who are so sober now,
Were then both young and gay.

'Tis fifty years ago, love;
I was but seventeen—
A simple, rustic maiden,
But happy as a queen.

Our home has been a happy one,
But one thing was denied:
The boon for which, like Hannah,
Unto the Lord I cried.

But from His poor, who through the street
Unpitied oft do roam,
We singled out a boy and girl,
And took them to our home.

The boy was winsome, bold and bright,
The girl was sweet and fair;
I lavished on them, day by day,
All a fond mother's care.

The lad had seen six summers,
The girl was turned of four;
We sent them to the village school,
To learn its humble lore.

They mastered all their teachers knew;
How proud we were, you know,
When John could read and write and spell,
And Sue could knit and sew.

They grew to youth and maidenhood,
And left the village school;
We thanked the Lord for His rich gifts,
And deemed our cup was full.

Our John grew tall and stalwart,
And longed to sail the sea,
And when we pleaded with him,
Grew strange to you and me.

The lad was not our flesh and blood,
We could not say him "Nay!"
Somehow he always had a knack
Of having his own way.

With breaking hearts, poor Sue and I
His shirts and jackets made,
And on the pile, when neatly done,
His little Bible laid.

Gay, joyous letters came at first,
Such as a boy would write,
And then a gloom of silence fell
Upon our hearts like night.

We learned at last—ah me!—we learned
What fate our boy befell;
How his ship went down off Hatteras
A comrade's pen did tell.

Poor Sue! what could I do or say?
She neither spoke nor stirred,
But gazed on me with vacant eyes,
As if she heard no word.

I had not dreamed she loved the boy
Save with a sister's love;
I hushed my own wild grief to soothe
My stricken, wounded dove.

But the white face on the pillow
Grew whiter each sad day—
A lily, broken on its stem,
She drooped and pined away.

We've none to lean on now, David,
Our lot seems sad and lone;
But still, through grace, we both can say,
"Thy will, O Lord, be done."

SENTENCED TO DEATH.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

The train was due, but it had not arrived yet. Twelve of us waited in the station with our carpet bags. Twelve men, dusty, weary, travel-stained, and not a woman among us. Eleven o'clock at night was the time, the weather gusty and the night dark. The station lay in a lonely spot of New Jersey, in a maze of interlaced tracks. There was nothing to eat and nothing to drink to be had there, and no time to search for it elsewhere.

"Haven't starved so since I was on the jury in the Fribble murder case," said a short passenger in a pea-jacket.

"Good time for the Jerseyites to murder some one *now*," said a tall man, with a great hamper and some fishing tackle by way of luggage. "Here's a jury ready—twelve on us."

"No there an't," cried a big man in a big white overcoat. "Count me out—only eleven of you. Wouldn't sit on a jury in a case of life and death. Wouldn't bring in a verdict of guilty if ten men had seen the deed done. Be hung myself first. Nothing is any proof."

"Reckon you don't hold to capital punishment," said the other.

"Don't believe any of the evidence," said white overcoat. "Why, man alive, I might have been hung myself, on the very best evidence, twenty years ago. I know what it's worth."

"You didn't do it then?" asked a very little old man, with no hair to speak of, and ears like an elephant's.

"You'd have sworn I did," said white overcoat, in nowise offended by the question. "So would Norris and Todd and Jacquin. I was a young fellow in a wholesale grocery then, just twenty; big for my age; horrible temper—awful fool—all boys of that age are."

"Extremely civil, certainly," remarked a boy of that age, who was warming his back at the stove. Nobody took any notice of him.

"Liked the girls," said white overcoat; "like 'em still, but not such a spoon as I used to be. I was very good looking, but Jacquin was handsomer, and Tilly Sparks said so. Her cousin told me that she did, any how; and as I'd been paying attention to her for three months, it wasn't pleasant to hear that on the very night when Tilly went off to church with Jacquin, and never so much as sent an apology to me; knowing, as she did, that I called regularly to take her every Sunday night.

"'It's a shame, Thomas,' said the cousin, a young married lady that she lived with. 'I scolded her for it, but she laughed at me. 'Jacquin is twenty times handsomer than Tom,' says she, 'and if I like a change, why shouldn't I have it?' And that's the truth, Thomas.'

"'Well,' says I, 'no doubt it is, and girls are girls. Let Tilly do as she chooses; but as for Jacquin, I'll spoil his beauty for him.'

"'Oh, no, you won't do anything desperate,' says she.

"'But I will,' says I, meaning it at the moment. 'Just wait. You'll hear something to-morrow.'

"With that I went off in a fury, meaning to thrash Jacquin next day. I hadn't a thought of cutting his throat, but I meant to give him two black eyes and a bloody nose, if I got the opportunity.

"Going home I met Todd.

"'What's the matter, Thomas?' says he.

"Thomas Thomas is my name.

"'If it isn't the moonlight, you're as white as powdered sugar.'

"'I'm white with rage, I suppose,' says I.

"'What about?' says he.

"'You'll see,' says I. 'Jacquin will see to-morrow. Jacquin is a contemptible jackanapes,' says I.

"'I reckon you're jealous,' said Todd. 'Look here. What's she to me? One gal is as good as another. I saw him sitting with his arm round her waist in the back pew—*that's* how I know. Never you mind.'

"'I *don't* mind,' says I. 'A girl that can do as she's doing is too despicable; but I'll *murder* Jacquin.'

"And off I went, in a greater rage than ever—along the street, up to my room, locked in. Then off with my boots, one against one wall, and one against the other, and out with it all. Read the form of excommunication if you want to know what I said about Jacquin.

"'Should think you'd be afraid to go to bed talkin' so,' said somebody, when I shut up at last.

"I looked around. There was Norris in bed; home, sick with a cold. I roomed with him. He was a good young man from Boston. All the good young men do come from there. He taught Sunday-school, and distributed tracts, and wanted to be a minister, only circumstances hadn't permitted.

"'I couldn't close my eyes,' said Norris, 'if I'd talked like that. You've mentioned the Evil One fourteen times, and you've spoken of the lake of fire and brimstone eighteen times. You've gone through the bones and j'ints that Jacquin is composed of like an anatomical work, and you've cussed 'em all separately, and you've threatened his life. Now, Thomas Thomas, you know you couldn't give life to so much as a—a—one of them,' and he pointed with his long lean finger to a flat red insect airing himself on the bed-quilt. 'Yet you talk of taking it from a feller-bein'. You—'

"'Hold your tongue,' yelled I. 'You an't ordained yet. Nobody is compelled to hear you preach until you are. I'll talk as I choose.'

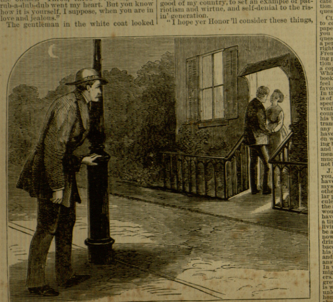
"'That's contemptible of you,' said Norris; 'but I'm goin' to forgive you. If father had died worth money, I should have been in the pulpit now.'

"'Wish you were,' says I.

"'No matter,' says Norris. 'It's my duty to forgive. Jest hist the lid of my trunk, and you'll find a tract or two suitable to your present frame of mind. You—'

"'Hold your tongue, or I'll souse you,' says I, flourishing the water jug.

"At this he tucked his tow-colored head under the sheet, and I put out the light and turned into my own bed; but I couldn't go to sleep, I was in such a tremendous rage. I lay there thinking and thinking, as if I'd been a machine made to turn out thoughts by the bushel. Throb, throb went my head; rub-a-dub-dub went my heart. But you know how it is yourself, I suppose, when you are in love and jealous."



The gentleman in the white coat looked straight at the *boy* of twenty as he spoke. The boy blushed, and said, "Yes, sir," very sheepishly.

"I thought," continued Thomas Thomas, Esq., "how gloriously I could give it to Jacquin. One, two, three—smash! One, two, three—crash! Down with him, and all that, you know. I thought I should like to break his nose and gouge his eyes, and leave marks on him for good. After a while I thought how I'd like to have a loaded pistol. *Then* I remembered that I had one. It didn't belong to me—I was keeping it for a friend. I had it in a bureau drawer—"

"Are you *sure* you didn't do it?" asked the little old man again.

Thomas Thomas went on as though the other had not spoken.

"Norris hadn't called to me as I went out of the room, so I suppose he hadn't heard me; but there I was in the street with the pistol in my breast pocket. It was not late yet—only ten. If Jacquin had been so greatly encouraged by Tilly Sparks, no doubt he was with her yet, courting her in the little parlor where I— Ah, well, no matter. I took my way toward that well-remembered door. I stood behind the lamp post on the corner, and took a peep. My suspicions were correct. He *had* been in, and was just bidding Tilly good-bye. I saw him squeeze her hand, and then I saw him kiss her.

"'By bye,' said Tilly, shrill and sweet, in the door-way.

"And the door shut, and on he came toward me, whistling as if he'd swallowed a canary-bird. And behind him, from under a porch where he'd been hiding, came a man—a great rough brute of a fellow—creeping, creeping on his track. They were opposite my lamp post, and I saw the fellow draw a pistol from his pocket and take aim straight at Jacquin's head. I forgot all my own rage then.

"'My God! Jacquin, take care of yourself!' I cried.

"And there was the report of a pistol, and I saw him before me flat on his face. The murderer rushed down the street, and I knelt beside him. Blood streamed from his temples all over my clothes, all over my hands.

"'Speak to me, Jacquin!' I cried.

"And then a hand came down on my shoulder, and I turned. A policeman stood there, and beside him stood Norris, with his head wrapped up in a tippet.

"'I knew where your angry passions would lead you,' said he. 'And, in spite of my cold, I followed. I'm very sorry for you, Thomas.'

"I don't know much more of that night, nor of the next day. I knew then that Jacquin was dead, and that I was supposed to have murdered him. No one believed my story of the man who had followed him. My hands were covered with his blood, and there were three witnesses—Todd, Norris and Tilly's cousin—to attest to the fact that I had threatened Jacquin's life. In fact the evidence was all against me. They didn't seem to take ten minutes to decide on the verdict, 'guilty.' Sentence of death was pronounced upon me by the judge, in less time than I can tell you of it.

"What had I to say for myself? Why, only that I was innocent. And who could believe that?"

"Too! too! too!" shrieked the engine whistle along the road.

"Train coming," cried the station-master; "don't stop a minute."

"But, good gracious," screamed the little old man, "how *did* it end?"

"Convicted murderer!" said the man with a white coat. "Sentenced to be hung next Friday. Gallows built; clergyman with me; letter to mother; letter to Tilly; black cap on; bell tolling ding dong, ding dong; out on the platform; crowd looking; last dying speech—"

"Too-o-o-o-ooo-oo-o-ooo," shrieked the engine.

"Passengers for Squiddlededink," yelled the voice at the door.

"My gracious!" screamed the little man, "*what* saved you?"

"Woke up," said Thomas Thomas, Esq. "Woke up then. Found myself in bed. Hadn't got up at all; pistol safe in the drawer. Norris snoring in the next bed. All a dream."

"A dream!" cried the little old man. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir."

And the train was off for Squiddlededink.

"Never touched Jacquin," said the story-teller, over his shoulder. "He married Tilly. *She* combed his hair for him. Good-bye, gentlemen." And he was off.

—To most men, experience is like the stern light of a ship, which illumines only the track it has passed.

UNREWARDED PATRIOTISM.

Solon Spriggles, faded sadly from the sprightly Spriggles of other years, was before the Municipal Court last week under charge of drunkenness. The Judge asked him if he had anything to say for himself, upon which Spriggles, holding on upon the rail before him for support, delivered himself as follows:—

"Your Honor, I *have* got something to say. I'd like to ask you who's the best citizen—him as supports government, or him as doesn't?

"You'll say, him as does, of course. Don't I support government? Don't every man that drinks support government, if he lickers at a house that pays license? Every blessed drop of licker he drinks there is taxed to keep the wheels of government agoin'. S'pose we was to quit drinkin'—why, government would go under. Whar would yer internal revenue come from?—Whar, I ask! Internal Revenue is the life of government, and that's why I drink.

"I don't *like* rum,—I mortally hates it. If I followed my own tastes and inclinations I'd rather drink butter-milk, or spruce beer, or ginger-pop. But as it is, I drinks for the good of my country, to set an example of patriotism and wirtue, and self-denial to the risin' generation.

"I hope yer Honor'll consider these things, and not be too hard on a poor citizen like me."

His Honor was visibly affected; and Spriggles was let off with fine and costs. C.

SCIENCE.

The proposition to use the poison of various animals for medicinal purposes is being advocated by several French physicians. Intermittent neuralgia is said to have been cured by the application of wasps' stings, in a case under the care of one M. Corbiot; and if we may believe the report of another doctor, the bite of a viper completely removed symptoms of heart disease, and left the patient apparently well. The account of the death of a negro in Brazil who allowed himself to be bitten by a venomous serpent, under the belief that he could thereby cure elephantiasis, from which he was suffering, lends much emphasis to the suggestion of the *Academy* that great caution should be observed in these experiments.

Some consternation appears to have been caused by the assertion of a certain Swiss astronomer, that in August next a collision is to occur between a comet and the planet on which we live. Should this prove to be true, our past experience does not forbode any very evil consequence to the earth; for, according to Professor J. R. Hind, a man whose opinions carry the weight of authority, "It appears not only possible, but even probable, that in the course of June 30, 1861, the earth passed through the tail of the comet—that is, the great comet of that year—at a distance of perhaps two thirds of its length from the nucleus."

The German botanist and explorer, Dr. Schweinfurth, has just returned from a long and difficult journey in Central Africa, during which he travelled through that part of the region west of the Upper Nile formerly visited by Petherick, as well as through some districts hitherto untrodden by Europeans. He had the serious misfortune to lose most of his drawings, nearly all the plants which he had collected, and every one of his instruments of reckoning, some time before the completion of his trip; and for some months he counted every step of his route, in order to make an accurate map.

A recent accident in France shows that a certain degree of danger attends the use of copper gas pipes, although we believe that such pipes are seldom employed in this country or in England. An explosion, by which a mechanic was severely burned, occurred while he was engaged in filing through the pipe, the interior of which was subsequently found to be lined with an acetate of copper which explodes at a temperature of 203 degrees or over.

The experience of the Germans with the various sorts of torpedoes which they employed for coast protection during the late war with the French, establishes the superiority of the electric torpedoes, fired by magnetic batteries on shore, over those which were arranged to explode upon contact with the enemy's ships. The latter were exceedingly liable to premature explosion while being placed in position.

Professor James D. Dana, the well-known geologist of Yale College, has been awarded the Wollaston Medal for the current year by the Geological Society of London; and the Royal Astronomical Society also confers its honors upon a foreigner in Prof. Schiaparelli, who has received its medal in recognition of his demonstration that the orbits of certain comets and meteor systems are identical.

It is an interesting fact that with the exception of one bird, the red grouse, and one species of orchid, (*spiranthes*,) Great Britain has no animals or plants peculiar to herself. As is the case with almost all islands at so short a distance from the mainland, the British fauna and flora correspond with those of the Continent—except, of course, in the two particulars just mentioned.

A method of preparing artificial fuel from coal dust has been invented by a resident of Philadelphia, and is favorably reported upon by a committee of the Franklin Institute, in that city, who examined the process at the request of the inventor. It is asserted that the cost of manufacture will not exceed one dollar per ton.

The domestic turkey, according to Mr. J. A. Allen, was introduced into Europe in the year 1524, or thereabouts, from Mexico, and was subsequently brought to the United States with the other domestic animals from Europe, about a century later.

A balloon ascent, under the direction of M. Dupuy de Lôme, was made from Paris on the 2d of February last, and an attempt to guide the balloon, by means of a steering apparatus attached to it, was partially successful.

The British naval authorities have declined to allow Lieutenant Dawson, of the Livingstone Relief Expedition, his full pay while absent in Africa on the humane service of affording succor to England's greatest explorer.

Owing to unpleasant weather at the astronomical station selected for the observation of the December solar eclipse in Australia, the expedition sent out from Europe to that continent was not successful.

A new species of rat indigenous in New Zealand has been discovered there, and is described in the latest publication of the prosperous scientific society which exists in that country.

A new species of green woodpecker has just been discovered in the south of Spain.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Cubano (New York) says: "Having been a reader of your valuable paper for a number of years, I beg leave to address you to-day on a subject of importance, on which I desire your views and advice. For almost six months I have visited the house of a friend, with whose daughter, a charming young lady, I became very intimate, and I must confess I began to love her with my whole heart and soul. On two occasions, when I thought I had not met with the usual kind treatment at her hands, I ceased my visits, and sent her two brief, but courteous notes, explaining my conduct. Matters were again set right between us, and I resumed my visits at the house of my friend. I was under the impression, in fact at times I felt sure that my love for the young lady was appreciated and reciprocated. From impressions, however, I was led to believe that I was sadly disappointed, and my course of action was plain before me. I began to feel miserable, and though I love the young lady even now as devotedly as ever, I sent her a letter explaining my future conduct, and requesting a return of the letters in her possession. As we were not engaged to one another, what is there in my conduct that deserves censure? The letters have not reached me. What am I to do? As I still love the young lady, what course should I pursue to regain her affection? Please advise a friend in adversity." We can hardly help thinking that you are impulsive and hasty. There should be no need for so much explaining in six months' sensible love-making. If you were not engaged, what right have you to presume that the young lady treasured your letters? They may have been treated as other passing notes. Of course it is impossible for us, not having the pleasure of knowing anything of you but your neat handwriting, and in entire ignorance of the tastes of the young lady, to indicate the way of "regaining," if you had it, her affection. We pity you much; but there are many Cuban questions time only can solve.

Clericus (New Orleans) says: "Your answers to correspondents in the column of your interesting paper has furnished me with much instruction. Will you please to oblige me by answering the following questions, if you are acquainted with the matter? Has a person the right, either according to law or a moral right, without consulting the author, to translate a French work published in Paris, which has the following printed on it: 'Right of reproduction and translation reserved?' If such a work were translated, could a copyright be procured for it in the United States? Which is the best kind of paper to write on for the book publishers, sermon paper or foolscap? I shall feel greatly indebted and much obliged if you would favor me with an answer in the columns of your *Ledger*." In the absence of an international copyright, the notice is of no force. It can only avail where rights are respected. We doubt if a man has a moral right to prevent the author arranging for *his* translation in this country—which conceivably he may do—and so picking his brains in the worst form. A copyright of such a translation could be obtained in this country; but any other person could translate the same work, and have his translation copyrighted. The kind of paper on which authors write is of little moment, if the writing be legible, accurate, and on one side of the paper, and the matter worth printing. Some men's—and women's—hieroglyphics are cheerfully made out with much difficulty; and other men's manuscript would not be used if it were legible across the Hudson.

J. W. L. (Muskegon, Mich.) says: "I now write you, asking advice, same as a good many are doing. I have two brothers, one younger and one older than myself, who can always talk about and see faults in others, but not in themselves. It has been their regular practice for the last year to laugh at, scoff and ridicule me in every manner, and will tell strangers to do the same. I have asked my parents frequently if they would have it stopped, but they will listen to what I have to say, and that is all. I have been tempted many a time to leave them all, knowing that I can make my living most anywhere, but thinking there would still be a hope of reform, I have remained at home. Home now has but little attraction for me. One of them can drink occasionally, talk vulgar nonsense, and chew tobacco to perfection, and the other is fast following in his footsteps. What is your opinion of such brothers, and what would you advise me to do? I hope you will answer this, through your *Ledger*, and greatly oblige." In view of the tobacco and the taunting, a sharp critic might apply the word "foul-mouthed" to these brothers. We put it more mildly, however. The practice grew up in thoughtlessness, till it became a habit. It is wicked and cruel. Your parents should stop it. But, unless you have other reasons for the step, do not leave home. Bear, and overcome by your self-control. The chances are you may have to support these youths when you are all men.

E. M. A. (Cincinnati, Ohio) says: "I come to you as thousands of others have, for advice. I have been a reader of the dear *Ledger* for some thirteen years, and this is the first time I have come to you for advice. I see what good advice you give others, and I know you can give it me also. I have been married seven years; have a good, kind husband and two little boys. My trouble is this: I have a way of speaking sharp and short to my husband and children, and getting angry at very trifling and small things. How can I quit it? I sometimes think it was born in me, for my father is just the same way—always mad, and don't know what makes him mad. I sometimes get to thinking about it, and I think it would be bad if I am permitted to live till I am old, to be a cross old woman. My husband is very quick-tempered, and then when I am mad he gets mad too; and I don't want my children to speak angry to one another. Please, Mr. Editor, don't throw this in the waste basket, but answer soon, as I shall be looking for it." There is no specific against bad temper but a resolute "I will not," to keep which purpose a Christian looks for aid from God. When you know your folly, you should be as decided in avoiding it as in keeping your hand out of the fire which you know will burn you. You had better set about reform for your husband's, your children's, and your own, sake. A cross woman, young or old, is a very unlovely object.

L. F. Casey (Illinois) says: "Please advise one of your readers on the following painful subject: I was married about a week ago, to a young lady, by a justice of the peace. The lady came prepared for a bridal tour, and gave her trunk to me to have checked as we left. We were married somewhat privately. After we we were married, she made some excuse and went home again, and in her hurry to get away forgot her trunk, which I have yet. She says she will not live with me until we are married by a minister, as she does not consider herself married, and won't live with a man unless he be her lawful husband. What I want to know is, if I can compel her to acknowledge me as her husband, or whether we had better be married over again by a minister, if this can be done, and whether I am justified in keeping her clothing. Please answer this in the *Ledger* as soon as possible, as I will abide by your decision." We have heard of evil-minded men who were willing to take the fortune in cash, and a promissory note for the bride. In your case, which is somewhat different, and indeed very touching, a man counting on a wife, and having only a trunk! you had better get the minister. This is a free country, and there is no objection to the step; and probably a lady who has so much fixed principle will "make a man of you." Don't try law. Love is better in a case like this. Meantime be kind to—the trunk.

Sappho (Middletown, N. Y.) says: "I have long read with interest your answers to correspondents, and now wish to trouble you for the first time. I ate a philopena with a gentleman from New York, and the agreement was to philopena one another—give and take. Afterward he handed me an article, and I said, 'Philopena!' He says I had no right to philopena him without handing him something. He says that is customary in polite society. I live in the country, and think we have as polite society here as anywhere; and it is customary for the one that thinks of it first to say, 'Philopena,' in giving or taking anything. Please answer, and state which is correct." We give it up for the present, but if information from those distant regions of polite society should reach us, on which an undoubted opinion can be based, we shall let you know.

T. Y. J. (London, Tenn.) says: "Will you be kind enough to answer, in your valuable and interesting paper, whether 'He,' in the twenty-third line of Pope's Essay on Man, refers to God or man? By so doing, you will decide a difference of opinion existing among a number of persons who have agreed to be governed by your decision." In our edition of Pope (London, 1735) there is obviously an obscure punctuation which mars the sense of the lines, but we understand the "He" to be not God, nor Man, but a hypothetical person, the sense being, "If any one through vast immensity can pierce," etc., he, such an one, in line twenty-eight, "may tell, why heaven made all things as they are."

Pedagogue (New Bethlehem, Pa.) says: "Suppose Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones to be first cousins, what relation would Mr. Jones' children be to Mr. Smith, and what relation would Mr. Jones' children be to Mr. Smith's children? By answering the above questions through the columns of your ever welcome *Ledger* you will settle a controversy between my friend and I." Mr. Jones' children will be Mr. Smith's first cousins, once removed, and the little Joneses and the little Smiths will be second cousins. By the way, as you are a pedagogue—which we presume is Greek for schoolmaster—how would you construe "between my friend and I?" Excuse our "objective."

Smoker (Franklin, Tenn.) says: "You will oblige an old and constant reader of the New York *Ledger* by informing him what is meant by Tammany. And do you think that moderate smoking is injurious? I have seen a good many articles on smoking, none of which commend it." Tammany was a wise Delaware chief whom the Democrats chose for tutelary saint. The New York Hall is so called. Smoking is not commended by us. Many allege that it affects the brain. Probably if there be little brain the mischief is proportionably small. Persons with splendid brains should stop it. You had better give it up.

One Hundred and Forty Pounds (Middletown, Conn.) says: "You have so little trouble from our fair and lovely city in answering questions, that I claim the privilege of asking one, and please do not refuse me, for it is my first. I have read of the 'Banting system,' but do not understand much about it, more than it is to reduce one's live weight. Please give me the principles of it in your dear paper as soon as convenient." The Banting system is living on meat diet, without ale, or farinaceous food, or vegetables, in order to reduce superfluous fat. Banting is, or was, an undertaker in London.

Missouri (Montgomery) says: "From what publication of recent date can I get the most information in reference to Central Africa and the Nile? Did ever such persons as Grant and Seek explore the Nile?" You must surely mean Speke, who has written on the source of the Nile; but Grant's "Walk across Africa," is the book you desire on Central Africa—1864. Du Chaillu has written a "Journey to Ashango Land."

W. A. (Newark, N. J.) "desires to know how many miles wide the North River is between Jersey City Ferry and the New York side at Cortlandt street. I thought the distance at that part of the river not over two miles, while my friend insists that it is five miles. We agree to leave it to you to decide." We agree with you in estimating the distance as under two miles.

Philadelphia says: "I am a young lawyer, and have a fine education, both legal and classical. I am also so situated as to be able to live with tolerable independence, outside of my profession; but have not had a single client since I began practising, two years ago. I have found out this about my profession: that in order to get practice, you must go about and make endeavors to that end, or get some older lawyer to help you. In the first place, I don't know any lawyer who will thus help me; and in the next place, I cannot, by nature, solicit, or drum, or make myself known in any such way; so that I may remain, Providence only knows how long, without making a single cent, or, what is more to me, without having a single piece of business to transact. I am naturally energetic, but in this particular am completely paralyzed and without energy. I know a considerable number of people here, but that does not benefit me. My reputation is high, both for my attainments and for studious and moral habits, and yet it benefits me not. I have never known any other lawyer to wait so long for business; those who came with me to the Bar, all have at least something to do, and I only ask that. An immense practice I never dreamed of. Now I think of removing to New York, where possibly I may feel a new life, but where I am unacquainted. I will not go to a small place on any terms, or give up my profession, although, when I am employed, I am contented, and hence a good reason to go into commercial life. What would you advise me to do, under the circumstances?" You should look about, and find something to do in your profession, in Philadelphia, where you are so well and so favorably known. If what you say about your education and position is true, you ought to be ashamed not to have got a case in two years. There must be something wrong. Call on some professional friend, and offer to help in a few cases for nothing. Visit the courts often, watch the proceedings, and volunteer as counsel for some poor fellow who is unable to employ a lawyer. In any event, do not think of coming to New York. There is no chance here for such an ineffective creature as you confess yourself to be.

Marie, after lamenting that she has seen no answer to some questions she sent, probably of little practical interest, and so made to give way to matters of living interest, says: "Now what I wish to know first is, is there any law to prevent card-playing on Sunday, that is, when it is done only as a pastime by the members of a family? and if there is, have officers any right to come into the back-yard of a gentleman's house and look into the windows, and if they see persons inside playing cards, to arrest them at once? I say that there is no such law, while a lady friend of mine maintains that there is. 2d. What is the meaning of the 'Myth of Orpheus?' I have seen a collection of engravings so entitled, and I should like to know what it means; and if there is a book about it, what is the name of it, and where may it be obtained? 3d. If a child changes his religion, and his parents being opposed, he leaves his home, and if his father dies without making a will, can his relatives deprive him of his share of the property? that is, can the law keep it from him on account of the change of religion? 4th. What is the cause of electricity being in a person? Now, dear *Ledger*, I hope I shall be considered worthy of notice this time. I am sure if you knew what a favorite you are with me, and how much pleasure I derive from your company, you would not fail to notice me." 1. There is, in the fourth commandment. As to police law, we never pretended to understand *it*. 2. Orpheus was a Thracian poet who is credited with doing many incredible things. He may be heard of in a Classical Dictionary, in a good "Mythology," and in Alexander Pope's "St. Cecilia's Ode." 3. No change of religion consistent with sanity deprives an American child of civil rights. 4. As to the cause of electricity in the human body, we cannot answer more concisely than in the formula, "Born so."

H. M. (New Jersey) writes: "I am a young man twenty-two years of age. There is a young lady in our town with whom I am deeply in love, and have been for five years past, although I have never had any acquaintance with her. I have seen her at church and places of amusement, and have watched her, for it seems as if I cannot keep my eyes off of her. She, in return, stares at me. Now what I want to know first is, do you suppose she thinks anything of me, from her looking at me so hard; or does she look to see what I am staring at nearly all the time? I should like to know how to make her acquaintance. I am not acquainted with any person that knows her. How am I to do it? I hardly think it will do to speak to a lady I do not know. From the fact that her father is a millionaire, and I not worth quite thirty thousand dollars, I feel a little backward, although my family is as respectable and stands as high as hers. It is not her father's money I am after, but her alone." Get some mutual acquaintance to introduce you, and then the young lady can answer your questions better than we can. Five years is a long term of silent love. You had better be a little more expeditious, or you may die of old-age without ever having declared your love.

G. R. H. (Wyoming, Pa.) writes: "I am now engaged to be married. I have heretofore kept company with another young lady of this place, during which time I have written to her, given her eulogistic compositions, and photographs. They are yet in her possession. She keeps them as evidence of my attentions to her, telling me she has destroyed them, and at the same time showing them to others. Now what is to be done? Can I procure them by law, or have I any claim on them, or can you inform me in what way I can have them kept at bay, and not have their contents published?" Your simplest way is to go directly to the young lady herself who has these things, and tell her that although she has said they were destroyed, yet you know they are not; that you are now engaged to another, and you wish her to give them up to you. She will probably comply with such a reasonable request, addressed directly to her. You might prevent the publication of the letters by an injunction; but we hardly think she will put you to the necessity of such a disagreeable remedy.

Geraldine (Williamsburgh) writes: "Will you please inform me, through the 'Notices to Correspondents,' if there is any possible way of getting over bashfulness? I am very much troubled in that way. I am a young lady, eighteen years old, and have just left school. When I am in company, I can manage to enjoy myself very much when I am well acquainted with all; but if there are strange young gentlemen there, I cannot find a word to say to them, especially if these same young gentlemen are not inclined to talk. And I have found that young gentlemen in general do not prefer quiet girls. Even when I am not bashful I sometimes feel quiet. I often wish I could go forward like other young ladies that I know, who never feel bashful; but I am afraid I can never get entirely over it, because I do not care much for gentlemen's company." Your bashfulness will not hurt you. Forward young ladies may attract more attention, but when it comes to marrying, the shy ones are apt to be preferred.

A. Wardlow says: "Having on several occasions received some good advice from your correspondents' column, I take the liberty of trespassing on your good-nature once more. The information I want is some instruction on the propagation of plants. I wish to know how to plant a slip or cutting, to cause it to grow, and become a healthy, vigorous plant. I have planted some in good ground, but do not succeed in getting them to take root. This being the season when information of this kind will benefit many readers, I have no doubt but that you will be pleased to enlighten your amateur florists." The counsel of a practical gardener must be sought; because the directions that suit one kind of cutting or planting may be quite unsuitable for another. Many amateurs pursue experiments on the authority of books that expressly treat of gardening. We could not hope to give useful directions for farming, gardening, boot making or coal mining, within the compass of these notices.

Alpine (Schenectady) says: "I having been a reader of the *Ledger* for the last two years, have resolved to trouble you with the following questions: 1st. Does the Gulf Stream favor the passage of vessels going from New York to England? 2d. If so, how far do they sail in it? And does it affect the climate of England? 3d. How near does it approach to England? Having argued about these questions with a man, in which I said it favors the passage, and affects the climate; but as I could not convince him by my own words, or by the words of Warren's Physical Geography, as he said he would believe a sailor before any Geography, I thought I would leave it to you." We agree with you so far as you agree with Warren's Physical Geography, and we recommend you to devote to the construction of sentences the time that is wasted in arguing with persons like your opponent. He should look out for a sailor.

Edna and Viola (Cincinnati, Ohio) write: "Having seen much valuable advice, and always sensible answers, given to correspondents, we, in our dilemma, come to you for your opinion of the following: Last Sunday evening we went out to church together; we were not accompanied by a gentleman, thinking it unnecessary, as the distance was short. After church, a gentleman friend—an intimate friend of one of us, the other having met him but once before—came up to us, and entered into conversation on various subjects. Finally he accompanied us to the door, and there very politely bade us 'good-evening.' Now what we wish to know is this: Was this perfectly proper, or was it a breach of etiquette? Should he not at least have offered his company?" It would have been more gallant, and certainly more natural, for the young man to offer to accompany you home.

W. M. C. (Nashville) writes: "Five miles south of this place lived a father and son. Near by lived a mother and daughter. The son courted and married the mother. The father courted and married the daughter. Both families have children. Now we wish to know what relation the father's children are to the son; and the son's to the father. Also, the children to each other." The father's children are half-brothers or half-sisters to the son. The son's children are grand-children to the father. Toward each other the children would hold the double relation of uncles and aunts on the side of one parent, and nephews and nieces on the side of the other parent. It is rather a mixed relationship, it must be confessed. There is a similar instance in this city, of two lawyers, a father and son; the son married the mother, and the father married the daughter.

Colonel (Topeka, Kan.) says: "Will you oblige me by answering a very simple question, which has caused a little discussion in this community? By whom was the 'Hidden Hand' first published, and at what time? Did it not appear first in the *Ledger?*" Yes, it was first published in the *Ledger*, in the year 1859, and has never been published anywhere else in the United States. We own the copyright. The "Hidden Hand" was republished in Europe, where, of course, an American copyright is not respected.

Querist (Malden) asks: "Is there a book published on the origin of surnames? And if so, where can I get it?" There are several books on the subject referred to. Ask your bookseller to get you one, if he has none on hand. He can order a copy through the house he buys his books of, in the city.

I. (St. Louis, Mo.) asks: "What State in the Union has a public whipping-post?" Delaware.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*